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Discerning the Lord's body





**DISCERNING THE  
LORD'S BODY**

*By the same author*  
**MANHOOD INTO GOD**

*Metacosmesis Mundi Per Incarnationem*

# DISCERNING THE LORD'S BODY

*The Rationale of a Catholic Democracy*

By

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*Superior of the Society of the Catholic Commonwealth*



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## Dedication

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## Preface

THIS BOOK had its origin in the need for a manual of instruction for the use of the Members of the Society of the Catholic Commonwealth. During the course of writing, that which was intended as a manual for a limited use has assumed the dimensions of a book which now sets forth in considerable detail a dogmatic analysis of the nature of the Christian Church and of her central Liturgical Memorial.

The origin of this work accounts for its somewhat didactic form. I hope, however, that this method of exposition may not be without appeal to many Liturgical Christians who are interested in relating their Liturgical practice to a progressive social action in their environmental world. This origin also accounts for the reappearance here of certain arguments and illustrations taken from my earlier book *Manhood Into God*, but now in more compact and, as I trust, clearer and more generally useful forms.

In this same earlier work I had attempted to extend the Sacramental concept of *Transubstantiation* to cover a wider process than that permitted by its rigid Scholastic definition. I have come to believe that this is inadvisable. Therefore, to the Liturgical process as a whole I have given the name of *Metacosmesis*. I have also concluded from reasoning developed in the text that the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of St. Mary, the Mother of Our Lord, now held as a "pious opinion" by many Anglicans, is a doctrine which is essential to all Liturgical Christians if they are to avoid the Scylla of Pelagianism on the one hand and the Charybdis of neo-orthodoxy on the other. I hope that the reader will permit his judgment on these controverted matters to wait upon a reading of the sequent pages.

In the preparation of this book all my fellow Members in the Society of the Catholic Commonwealth have had their important part; since it is only out of the dialectic of my

own association in this Society that the arguments here presented have emerged. But I am under a particular obligation to three Members, Professor Marshall Swan, of Tufts College, Dr. David Hecht and Mrs. Dora Hoague. These have given generously of their energy and time to criticising the manuscript and helping with proof correction.

F. H. S.

*Oratory of Saint Mary and Saint Michael, Cambridge, Massachusetts.  
Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, 1945.*

DISCERNING THE  
LORD'S BODY

If this seems to start our enquiry at too early a point, it must be replied that a confusion of thought at this partly philosophical, rather than purely religious, level has threatened the integrity of the Religion of the Incarnation almost from its very beginning. It has gravely compromised the Church's own presentation of her faith throughout the centuries. It has often rendered her decisions in matters of policy and action in practical human affairs uncertain, or even downright mistaken, and contrary to the Christian welfare of man. Today it is this same confusion in what is really a pre-Christian area of thought, which more than any other factor makes it almost impossible for most people to apply the rational and spiritual resources of Christianity to a solution of the present world crisis.

The confusion arises from the fact that two very different views of the natural world have commended themselves respectively to large groups of people. That human life as experienced by us is beset with evil and sorrow and death, that both individual interior lives and the arrangements of social environments are fraught with disorders which bring injustice and hate, frustration and despair, viciousness, cruelty, oppression and violence in their train, has always been clear to every thoughtful person. But disagreement has arisen relative to the source of these disorders.

#### THE NON-CHRISTIAN ANALYSIS: WORLD AS ESSENTIALLY EVIL

To some it has seemed that the evils of our experience issue from an intrinsic principle of evil inseparably and ineradicably resident in the material world itself. It is therefore utterly impossible for the spiritual potentialities of man fully to be realized within it. In proportion as men are to any degree involved in the clinging defilements of material creation, even to the possession of material bodies, by just so much are they impeded from all genuine spiritual progress, by just so much must they fall short of true perfection, by just so much are they separated from an ultimate salvation of their souls.

The most pressing problem which confronts men of this belief is therefore that of withdrawing themselves from their hindering natural environments. They must seek a way of escape from the spiritual trammels constitutionally present in the material world. Their rational thought, their philosophy, their practical wisdom and, above all, their religion will be intensively devoted to the principles and techniques of extrication of human spirits from their material meshes, as gold might be extricated from its clogging matrix. The material matrix of our world can then be left heedlessly behind to go its way to that perdition which is the logical consummation of its essentially evil nature.

Beliefs in the material world as one of irredeemable evil, together with religions of more or less thoroughgoing spiritual extricationism which correspond to such beliefs, have dominated many great cultural traditions, more especially in eastern countries. Buddhism is the most consistent example of an extrication religion, and it properly provides the most complete techniques for accomplishing its ends. Buddhism, in fact, extends the principle of evil from matter alone to the very fact of individuated existence, whether under material or spiritual circumstances. It is therefore a religion of extrication not alone from this world, but from all individuated existence under any mode whatever. It would guide men into a state of non-being called Nirvana. It goes to the length of insisting that even the gods, provided they do exist at all, must by that fact also labor under the disabilities of individuated existence. So they too, for their ultimate perfection, must travel the road to Nirvana. Thus Buddhism in its primitive purity is a system of belief bordering on a thoroughgoing philosophical atheism, probably the only such religious system ever known. However, all other religions which are held by men who believe that the natural order involves a principle of evil must necessarily be religions of some sort of extrication. Such extrication might be by way of the Buddhist Nirvana, or through the less radical — and for most people the more congenial — method of death of the physical body, with the rescue of

the surviving individual soul in a spiritual and blissful heaven after that final material event.

### THE CHRISTIAN ANALYSIS: WORLD AS ESSENTIALLY GOOD

Christians, on the other hand, who reaffirm the ancient Jewish belief about the natural world, assert that our present world is essentially good. For Christians, as for Jews, this world is the created work of a God who is Himself perfect both in goodness and power. It would be irrational to harbor the notion that a world which flows from the creative activity of such a God could contain elements of essential and irredeemable evil in defiance of His good and overruling will. It would be a contradiction in terms and tantamount to a denial either of God's goodness, of His omnipotence, or of both together. The basic Christian belief concerning the nature of God forbids this conclusion, and it becomes clear that the Christian view of our world is precisely the opposite of those who find a principle of evil resident in the natural order. The necessary starting point for any further rational understanding of the Christian Faith is the conviction that our material world is, in its essential nature, good.

It follows from this belief that no Christian can place the source of evil and sin within the very essence of our natural order. Neither inanimate things nor the various attributes of human nature can be labelled evil in and of themselves. Thus, for example, we can attribute no essential evil to such material things as alcohol or playing cards, factory machines, large-scale power generators, aeroplanes, or even to guns and explosives. Neither can we label as evil such natural human instincts as those of hunger, of sex, of self-preservation, or the desire for personal happiness. Likewise we cannot condemn, in and of themselves, human capacities and endowments like those for playful recreation, or for aesthetic or dramatic expression. Least of all can we discover intrinsic evil in the human gift of reason or in man's potentialities for the intellectual life.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> One of the most disturbing suggestions which emanate from certain anti-rational quarters of the present day is that human reason

In short, all the elements of God's creation are good in that they are capable of being put to a good purpose and of showing forth, in their proper and mutually ordered use, God's will as well as His glory within His created world. Thus in the Christian view evil consists in the misuse of the potentialities of God's creation. It consists in a disorder introduced among the relationships of creation's component parts. Our evil world is looked upon as one might view a work of art sadly broken into pieces, the pieces being strewn about in disorder; or with many of them actually recombined into lesser shapes, sometimes ugly and grotesque, all too often obscene and murderous, and always into something falling far short of the intention of the creator of the original art object. As can be seen from this analogy, the evil of the world consists in its broken-ness and in the misuse of the resulting fragments and dislocated elements. But no evil can be imputed to original natural creation, nor even to its present confused fragments, *qua* fragments.

### THE SOURCE OF EVIL TRACED TO MAN

A further question immediately arises. If what has just been said be true, how is it possible that disorder has found its way into a creation whose order must in the beginning have corresponded perfectly to God's will? Certainly we cannot affirm that such subsequent disaster stems from God any more than we can imagine God as the source of evil at the initiation of His creation. The answer to this question leads at once to man.

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is a kind of undesirable parasite which feeds upon true man! This is, of course, a radical denial of the Christian view of human nature which is that the form of man is a rational soul. Reason is the highest human faculty. It is no accident that fascist "philosophers" try to belittle this faculty. They can even call in certain "psychologists" to support the contention that reason is a late and undesirable evolutionary intrusion into the proper nature of human beings. This is why we hear so much about "feeling," about "racial consciousness," rather than reason, as a basis for proper human behavior. This is why fascists advise us to "think," not with our minds, but with our blood!

Man is the sole created being known to us within our material world who has been endowed with the power of reason. By that fact he is the sole possessor of a certain degree of autonomous power of choice both in thought and in action. He alone in our material world is possessed of what is called Freedom of Will. This means that man lives within God's world under the condition of adhering to His ordered purpose through a certain freely maintained and continuing rational allegiance. To be sure, man is rooted in the material order and is definitely a part of it. But his individual choices in thought and action, while partly conditioned by many external forces, both of history and of environment, always contain significant conditioning elements which have their origins solely within his rationally exercised human will. This is that freedom with which God has willed to dignify man alone among all His other creatures on this earth. This is what we mean when we affirm that man is made in the image of God.

But a free allegiance within God's order means also a correlative freedom to betray God's trust. A freedom in obedience means also a potential freedom for disobedience. For this is the kind of freedom possessed by members of an orchestra who follow their conductor with an intelligently exercised will, but who also have the corresponding individual freedom to play discordant notes if they so deliberately choose. Thus a free part in the maintenance of God's order in human life involves necessarily the freedom to choose a lesser good and so to introduce disorder.

Man alone in this world, by virtue of his free reason, has this dangerous latter power. Unfortunately, he has chosen to exercise it. He has chosen to introduce disorder, evil, sin into the ordered wholeness of human life, both in its social and its individual aspects. He has chosen—and still does choose—to "play wrong notes." This, in Christian philosophy, is the source of what is called evil. Disorders introduced into the historical process, beginning at some remote time we know not when, but whose continuing and increasingly involved consequences we ourselves receive today as handed on to us out of the past, are called under the general

name of Original Sin. Further and cumulative disorders when contributed voluntarily by living men to their contemporaneous world are called actual sins.

### CHRISTIAN IDEA OF SALVATION

To a Christian, therefore, it must be clear that the problem of redemption or of salvation cannot possibly be that of devising means of spiritual extrication from the environment of God's world. For although this world is grievously marred and disordered, it is still essentially good. It therefore has the highly important potentiality of being reperfectible. If in the presence of this potentiality man turns his back upon it and seeks a way of escape, he commits sacrilege in that his escapism expresses contempt of God through a cynical hopelessness that God's handiwork can ever be restored to the divine purpose. And if man refuses to give himself in humble penitence to the work of reparation of that damage of which he himself is the responsible cause, if he seeks spiritual rest rather than face his obvious and justly required duty within the material world, then he adds to his earlier disobedience a kind of frivolous defiance of the divine will.

Christian salvation therefore begins, not in the abandonment of the world, but in its reperfection. This is why the Christian Religion is essentially one of redemption of the world, of recall or restoration of a disordered creation. And individual human beings begin to be redeemed or saved as they give themselves here and now to this enterprise of the re-creation of the world of human life as a whole. He that loseth his life—i.e. is willing to sink himself wholly—in this necessarily corporate human endeavor, shall indeed begin to find it, both in this life and, as we shall presently see, in eternity.

### NON-CHRISTIAN CONFUSION IN CHRISTIAN THINKING

In so far as men have introduced into Christian thinking that false notion of the essentially evil and hopeless quality of God's creation or of that of any of its various single elements and in so far as they have believed that man's sal-

vation consists primarily in a kind of fishing out of spiritual souls from this clogging material morass, by just so much have they confused the basic understanding of the peculiarly Christian problem. This confusion has perverted much actual popular and even official "Christianity" into an enterprise of extricationist soul-saving. The official Church, intent upon getting souls out of this world into some supposedly ready-made heaven, seems to have an attitude towards this world hardly distinguishable from that of the Buddhist. And Christian people, deeply confused by this perverse presentation of their professed religion, can find little rational cause for concern with the attempted improvement of a world which they have been told is at heart hopelessly evil and is therefore to be abandoned in the end for a better home in heaven. Neither can they see any necessary or functional connection between a concern for this world and the so-called salvation of their souls, since this salvation is accomplished through a religious extrication of souls out of this world.<sup>2</sup>

This bewildering contradiction arises precisely from the disastrous importation into Christian tradition of the negative, rejective attitudes towards God's world which have characterized certain alien religions. Such attitudes, proper to Buddhism, are utterly alien to Christianity, but they have vitiated the thinking of hosts of Christians. Unfortunately, they filtered into Christianity at a very early date, and wherever and whenever they have taken root, they have

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<sup>2</sup> Karl Marx understood Christianity in this way. This is the reason why he called religion an opium of the people. He thought religious salvation was a trumped-up, mystical *ersatz* for all attempt at a rational improvement of the lot of man in this world. Marx's charge seems justified fundamentally if directed at Buddhism. It was justified practically by the "Christianity" that he knew. It is justified by most "Christianity" today. Our problem is to reassert the genuine Religion of the Incarnation and to apply this to the redemption of our world. When this is done, Marx's successors and followers will finally see that Christianity does not stand in opposition to their humanist aims, but is instead the necessary completion and crown of all that is good in that very social revolution which they themselves now hope to bring about.

tended to pervert Our Lord's religion into a monstrous hybrid, unsure as to whether it affirms or denies the value of God's creation, and unsure of either the possibility or the necessity of the restoration of our natural order to the order of God's will. Christianity has tended to become a religion neither fully extricative nor fully redemptive. The resulting composite muddle—a strange mixture of desire for flight to a future heaven impossibly combined with a sentimental regard for an evil world which is nevertheless viewed as something to be abandoned—has reduced multitudes of Christians to an almost schizophrenic impotence.<sup>3</sup>

It follows that a fresh and correct understanding of the relation of man's eternal salvation to the redemption of God's world here and now is indispensable to the rehabilitation of Christianity in the eyes of many people of good will. For many such now reject it chiefly because of its apparent extricationism, and because, by the same token, it appears logically as if it were unconcerned with a vigorous attack on the evils of those conditions under which men now live. Furthermore this fresh understanding is needed by Christians themselves if they are to make a rational application of the resources of their religion to the cure of those disorders which immediately confront them in the world of present experience. To further this understanding is the central purpose of the following discussion.

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<sup>3</sup> A whole class of pilgrim hymns, unfortunately often set to good tunes and therefore popular with Christian congregations, contributes to this confusion. The doctrinal basis assumed in them is that this world is a night and a darkness, a doleful place which is somehow to be endured, got through with and left behind, while the light of a ready-made extricationist heaven (with Angels) cheers the sad travellers by beckoning from afar.

## II

# The Problem of the Redemption of the World: First Stage

### PROBLEM FROM POINT OF VIEW OF MAN: THE OBSTACLE OF DISORDER IN HISTORY

THE RESTORATION OF GOD'S CREATION to an order and a sanity which is according to His will presents two great difficulties. The first is the difficulty of this redemptive work from the point of view of man. The second which we shall consider later is, if we may say so, the difficulty of redemption from the point of view of God.

The human part of the problem presents to unaided man more than a mere difficulty. It presents, in fact, a complete impossibility. The problem transcends even the highest powers of man, unless the power of the Creator Himself be invoked to crown man's strivings and to bring fruition to human efforts which by themselves must prove utterly vain.

The reason for this is most clearly seen through a consideration of man's peculiar relation to the time process in which his life is set. Time is a kind of dimension of our natural world, yet man's relation to it is different from his relation to the dimensions of space. In space one may go back and forth or up and down. One may retrace a path and stand on the exact spot which one has previously left. But this is not true of time. This dimension has the peculiar property of not being retraceable. In time we can go in but one direction—into the future. We may exercise human memory and picture past time, but it is beyond our power literally to retrace it, to experience as a new future that which has irrevocably receded into the past.

If we were to think of the disorders in our world from the point of view of a static, merely spatial disarray, their reordering would not seem at any rate theoretically im-

possible. The problem might be approached as one might approach a jig-saw puzzle. It would doubtless require great skill and attention. From its "pieces" (which in this case are primarily human individuals, human groups and their manifold interrelationships) it would demand a great willingness to be moved from old disordered patterns to which they had become habituated, into new and, at the beginning it may be, much less comfortable formations. It might require a spirit of sacrifice (which also introduces a moral element) on the part of all concerned including the human "pieces" themselves. But in the nature of things, the various pieces and parts could be moved back and forth. If they did not fit in one place at first trial, there would be nothing irrevocable about this. They could be moved to other positions in space until they finally did fit. Theoretically, from the point of view of plain physical possibility, the puzzle could be solved.

But the disorders of human life exist also under the forms of fragments, disruptions, wrong relationships and purposes, introduced into the time dimension of our historical world. And in time, once an element of experienced history is out of order, once such an element is misdirected or introduced for a purpose short of God's will, man alone can never "move it back and forth" or bring it into a more fitting historical relationship. It becomes objectively inaccessible. Nevertheless, various results or consequences flow necessarily from every evil in past time. These consequences, in turn, become elements in the disordered environment with which man must deal in his attacks upon his contemporaneous present. Thus man discovers that the pieces of his puzzle exist not merely in present space, but that they are rooted within the past through the causal sequences of that history out of which they grow. They are rooted much as plants are rooted in the sub-surface soil which nourishes them. But in this case, the roots of man's contemporaneous world are held firmly within a dimension which cannot be retraced. He finds, therefore, that in so far as the fitting together of the pieces of his puzzle involves an access to their

roots in time, he stands impotent in the presence of this requirement. In the very nature of his relation to the time dimension, the complete reperfection of the structure of God's creation is utterly impossible to his unaided powers.

### A PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATION OF THE TIME PROBLEM

It will clarify this somewhat abstract discussion to apply again the analogy just used in comparing man's position within God's world to that of the players of an orchestra. In an orchestra all the players make a common agreement to produce a given piece of music, following both the notes of the score and the direction of their conductor. But each separate player cooperates freely and by the continuing allegiance of both his individual mind and his will. It was seen that such freedom necessarily involves the correlative freedom to desert the common purpose. A player might, when he wishes, play a false note.

Let us suppose that one player does so choose. A dissonance immediately follows. The proper order of the music is broken. Something less than the common purpose of the composer, of the conductor, and of all the rest of the orchestra, is achieved. How can this disorder intruded into the historical time process be repaired? In this simple case, no doubt, by silencing the orchestra, starting the music over again and replaying it without the introduction of the disorder.

But does this really repair the damage in its entirety? Clearly not. The individual misdeed may be forgotten. The newly and correctly played composition may satisfy an audience. It may satisfy even the wounded sensibilities of the conductor and the other players. But the fact remains that the former playing of a wrong note is now an objective element of history, it is enshrined inaccessible in past time. Its physical effects in air or electrical vibrations remain. We cannot escape this fact. That in this very minor incident its effects are so trifling as to be humanly negligible, does not alter the fact that a wrong note was played. Thus, while the correct playing of the music at any later time may

make us forget, it cannot eliminate the disturbing consequences of the earlier fault. Every fresh playing of the composition, no matter how perfectly accomplished, now emerges into an environment already itself somewhat disordered through the inheritance of the effects of a past disordered event. Man can indeed replay the music. But the one thing which seems needful in this situation man certainly cannot do. He cannot return to a point in time before the original dissonance and be thus in a position to attack the problem of the original disharmony, so that the dissonances which succeed it and which now vitiate the perfection of his present situation may be creatively re-woven into a fresh pattern of that perfection which is required if his future—from the present onwards—is fully to be restored to a harmony proper to it and in conformity with God's will.

Yet it is this kind of what may be called a re-creative attack upon history which a fully functional perfection of God's world in all its dimensions requires. For it is only by exercising a creative control over present evil effects rooted in disordered sequences of the past that a basis can be laid for a perfected future development. Without this retroactive power, the consequences of any given past disorder will project themselves indefinitely into the future. Unaided man has no such creative control in the time process. He can do much towards the rational alleviation of disorder within his own present. He can always do something over again or improve a given situation. But all such activity, being confined to future consequences only, must leave the roots of his disorders in time untouched. Man's power therefore can never carry beyond a kind of patching up of the disordered world. Unaided man can only allow for past disorders and their inalienable present consequences. To reperfect the world, to redeem it wholly, so that the disorders of the past can in no smallest manner vitiate the ordered purposes of man's future, requires the invocation of some power which can transcend time. It requires a power added to man's potentialities which can exercise some kind of retroactive power over the time dimension. Only

thus can all the "wrong notes" of history — notes which obviously have much more disastrous present consequences in both material and spiritual affairs than the trivial dissonance of our orchestral illustration—be literally refitted into a newly perfected pattern conforming to God's will. Only thus can the structure of our world be restored to a genuinely functional wholeness of pattern both in space and time.<sup>4</sup>

God Himself, of course, cannot undo any past event in the sense of deleting it from a completed time sequence. To do this would be to contradict the very nature of the time process which inheres in His own creation.<sup>5</sup> But what He can do, in an action not open to unaided man, is to bring all present effects of past evils into a newly ordered present structure in such wise that it may be said: "Now the pattern of the past has been so reappropriated into the structure of the present that even past disordered notes can take their functional places within a newly bestowed and over-ruling harmony of fresh perfection." Thus can God alone make *all* things work together for good!

#### A PHILOSOPHICAL ILLUSTRATION OF THE TIME PROBLEM

We may put this problem in other and somewhat more classical terms. In every situation or set of relationships in which I, for example, find myself at any particular time, there is a certain potentiality for my personal development, that is for growth, for further actualization of myself as a human creature. If I so choose my way that the inherent potentiality of the situation is completely actualized according to God's will for me, then I have acted perfectly and without any trace of sin. But if I fall short of this possible actualization, I accomplish something less than that complete actuality which resides in the potentiality presented to me. Such failure to realize or make actual a potentiality of this kind is a sin.

By this time, however, I have arrived at another and later

<sup>4</sup> See Appendix I, page 198.

<sup>5</sup> St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica I*, Q 25, Art. 4.

point in the time process of my life. I am now in the presence of a fresh situation whose new potentialities must in turn be actualized in a fresh immediate future. If one of the factors in this new situation is an incompletely actualized potentiality of that situation which I have just left behind, I am now compelled to build on this deficiency. I may now build as well as may be, but this new and improved way of acting does not and cannot supply the deficiency upon which I build. Neither can I supply the deficiency, because its origin is behind me in an irretraceable past.<sup>6</sup>

It may be argued that I, as a rational human being, can make due allowance for the deficiency. I may "make up for it" in such wise that the final result will seem superficially just as good—or even seem exactly the same—as the achievement would have been had I succeeded in a complete actualization of the potentialities in the first situation within which, in the beginning, I set out to act. But this end result, although perhaps satisfactory as a matter of momentary or local present experience, will not be a result which contains the full actualization of the initial potentialities with which I began. It cannot *be* exactly the same as the other. The earlier potentialities, as a matter of historical fact, are *not* actualized. I am thus now in a position which may seem, humanly speaking, just as good as the other would have been. But this is not all that my own present perfection—freedom from sin—requires. Instead my complete redemption requires that I be found in a situation within which all the potentialities of the past are fully actualized. Otherwise, I shall continue to have a deficient basis in present potentiality for every future actuality or advance. It is therefore God alone who, transcending the time process, can actualize the unrealized potentialities of my past within the present moment of my life. And this must turn out to be a truly time-transcending and creative act. Without this kind of intervention within the process of my own time-bound efforts, I can have no hope of a

<sup>6</sup> It is obvious that every situation which man now confronts in the period subsequent to the Fall, has this deficient character.

genuine and ultimate perfection. Furthermore, an exactly analogous argument holds when applied to the historical development of the human social process as a whole. This is the basis of the social difficulty which confronted the orchestra of our earlier analogy.

#### PROBLEM FROM POINT OF VIEW OF GOD: OBSTACLE OF MAN'S FREE REASON

The question immediately arises: how, or by what method, can the time-transcending power of God be applied to this problem of disorder in a one-way history within which His human creatures are now involved? And the answer to this question must solve precisely that difficulty which we have just called the difficulty of man's redemption from the point of view of God.

To the Hebrew nation of the ancient world the answer seemed fairly simple. The Jews expected a divine ruler to appear in their midst, one who would exercise the requisite time-transcending power through irresistible and overruling force. They awaited the long hoped-for Messiah who would simply impose upon individual men and upon human society a new justice and a new human perfection to replace ancient miseries, injustices, and sins. The Messiah would, as it were, start human life going over again. Brooking no opposition, he might well annihilate all obstinate sinners and all resisters to the divine will. But, at any rate, the difficulties of a disordered past would be banished through the direct expedient of a divinely forced break within human history. Human life could thus be re-created on a completely sound basis. Those who were then found worthy of so high a destiny, freed from the entanglements of disordered history, could thenceforth carry on within a perfectly renewed and re-created future under the Messiah's continuing rule.

The difficulty with this relatively simple plan is that it leaves a major element of the actual situation completely out of consideration. It is true that the power of the transcendent Creator is here invoked. Also God does appear to respond to man's need and, by an overruling act

of re-creation, He sets the disordered world to rights. He puts the pieces of His broken handiwork together again according to the pattern of His primal will. But the Jews did not realize that *re-creation*—reparation, redemption—has to deal with a situation very different from that within which the first creation of our natural world went forward. The first creation was an operation of bringing initial order out of pure chaos. In such a situation the transcendent, overruling power of a Creator may indeed be directly and forcibly applied. There is, for example, no need of “consultation” with chaos about the method to be used. Nor would the Creator in such a case have need to tread carefully lest, as He calls forth a new order, some already existing order or value be itself destroyed. Chaos contains no such values and within it there is nothing to be lost.

On the other hand, our present world, dreadfully disordered though it be, is by no means pure chaos. On the contrary, it contains elements of an already developed natural order which in any restoration of that order to its proper and complete wholeness must neither be destroyed nor lost. In fact, it is precisely from these now fragmentary and disjointed elements that God's new or redeemed creation must be re-formed. The “putting together again” of God's world needs a very different approach from its first creation out of chaos.

Specifically, the most important elements in our disordered world are rational—that is, free—human natures. It is to a world of rational human beings that God's creative power now has to be re-applied. And this application cannot be made under the form of a non-consulting, overruling force. For the transcendent power of their Creator, applied to rational creatures without at the same time enlisting their consent and the fullest free cooperation in the proposed action which still remains potential within them, would cause not their restoration to a new ordered life, but instead, their destruction as free beings. Primal chaos might be ordered in spite of itself. Free human beings cannot thus be “pushed around” without their partial or complete destruction. Thus the “Messiah Method” of sal-

vation as envisaged by the ancient Jews was a method suitable to a disorder containing no rational elements. Applied to a world containing rational beings as its most important elements, it amounts to a method of "Divine Fascism." Even human fascism warps and perverts souls because it refuses to enlist the rational cooperation of its individual human units. It tries to impose a social order by application of a non-consulting, overruling force. If this is the disastrous effect of a human attempt to order men's lives in spite of themselves, how much greater the danger if this method were employed by God! It would result in the utter destruction of men as rational free beings. The Messiah Method of traditional Jewish thought cannot be employed as a method of the redemption of a rational human world.

#### THE INCARNATION AS THE SOLUTION OF BOTH PROBLEMS

Here then is the double difficulty. On the one hand all human endeavors, without divine intervention, no matter how well intentioned and temporarily fruitful, are quite literally worthless from the point of view of ultimate salvation of the world. Man stands completely helpless in the presence of the problem with which the one-wayness of time confronts him; his unsupplemented strivings for the restoration of order in the process of history are completely devoid of any final value whatever. All man's unaided works will be lost in the disordered oblivion of time. On the other hand, God's creative assistance in this desperate need cannot be bestowed as an overruling force. To do this would be not to redeem man but to destroy him. God's response to man's need must not supplant man's own potential rational contributions to the final solution. Instead of this, God must implement, complete, and crown those rational free powers which still remain in man. The power of God must be applied to man's salvation in such wise as to include all contributing human efforts within that final solution which God wills to bestow. And when they are thus included, man's free contributions to the whole process will then be validated within that trans-

cent level whence the redeeming power of God ever originates and proceeds.

The solution of this difficulty, which to human thought must appear almost in the guise of a hopeless dilemma, is provided perfectly, without the slightest inner contradiction, in the Incarnation of God the Son. Through the method of the Incarnation, God both applies His eternal creative power to man's time-bound need and simultaneously He uses every value of man's free cooperation within the process of his own redemption. Thus God neither holds aloof from man, nor does He descend upon him from a transcendent level in such wise as to destroy him.

In the Incarnation, God the Son, whose Personal function within the Triune Godhead is precisely that of Him through whom the creative power of God is implemented,<sup>7</sup> emerges within the level of our natural world. God the Son initiates the process of the re-creation of His own earlier but now disordered creation by the method of clothing Himself with those very elements within it which have fallen into disarray. For the first time in history since the fall of man, a completely perfected unit of humanity is thus created in the world; for it is a unit of humanity rooted in the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity. And this clothing of the elements of our created humanity upon the Person of God the Son is the Creator's method of the redemption of His world.

How is this conceivable? How is it possible that Very God, without contradicting His own divine nature, should be able to take into Himself the elements of created human nature? The answer to this appears in the character of the nature of man. Man is created as a rational, free being. In this, man is unique among all other creatures which exist within our material world. For man's substance is compounded of a material body informed by a rational soul. He has therefore been endowed with a limited, but none

<sup>7</sup> Nicene Creed: I believe . . . in One Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God . . . God forth from (᾽κ) God . . . being of one substance with the Father, through (διά) whom all things were created.

the less genuinely free, autonomy. And this autonomy man is permitted to exercise creatively and with a certain initiative stemming from, and responsible to, his human reason alone. But a rational nature which is endowed with at least a modicum of autonomous initiative, reflects the absolute, free, creative power of its Creator. Under the conditions of time and space rational human nature reflects the divine reason. It corresponds to the divine nature. Because of this, man is properly said to be created in the image of God. And because of this compatibility, this correspondence, between the divine and human natures, all the elements of the latter can be clothed by God upon Himself.

#### METHOD OF THE INCARNATION: ITS INDIVIDUAL ORGANISM

God the Son emerges in His world at a certain time and place. The process of the Incarnation begins at a little provincial town in Galilee of Palestine, called Nazareth. The time of this beginning is now almost two thousand years past.

The process of taking the elements of human nature into God follows the pattern of the initiation of life, of birth, of growth, and of gradual maturing which can be observed in the natural life-process of any other human being. That is, God the Son—the eternal Logos, as He is also called<sup>8</sup>—starts His enterprise of the re-creation of His own creation at the level of the matter of this world. His first movement is to take the material seed of a human body upon Himself. He takes this necessary initial material from the body of a young Jewish maiden named Mary.<sup>9</sup> The material body

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<sup>8</sup> John I: 1.

<sup>9</sup> Note that this first creative movement is initiated wholly by God. God utilizes matter for the organization of His human body, and for this He has need of a human source. But it is God alone who utilizes this source. It is God alone who seizes upon those human materials which He proposes to order into Himself. This is a transaction, therefore, solely between God, as creative Initiator, and the Lady Mary, as co-operating human source. There is no room for any extraneous human intervention. This is one of the chief significances of the Virgin Conception of Our Lord. The divine initiative is thus kept completely intact.

matures in the womb of this young girl and, in due time, is born into the world of human society.

From the point of His birth onward, God continues and expands his re-creative work. He does not cease to take additional matter into Himself and His physical human organism grows and gradually matures. But now the other and non-material elements of human nature are also incorporated into His growing individual humanity. Human functions of every kind are developed, the so-called five senses begin to be exercised, human instincts, psychological affections, and human passions are assumed; and little by little the faculties of intellectual and religious life are developed. Human skills (e.g. very probably the skill of carpentry) and human knowledge (e.g. knowledge of sowing and harvest, the lore of weather and changing seasons) become elements in God's perfectly ordered human equipment. And pervading all this pattern of a complete Man, we find a deep knowledge and experience of God. The elements of this religious equipment we find taken first from Our Lord's own family environment, next from the environment of the local synagogue and study of the Hebrew Scriptures, and finally from participation in the Temple worship at Jerusalem.

In all this process of the fresh creation of a new individual human being, we should think of the Divine Logos working, as it were, in the manner of a creative artist, forming, ordering, a new and perfected unit of humanity from the "raw materials" which are already available within His own creation. But as the divine creative Power thus forms a new human unit by taking the requisite elements of human nature into Himself, that humanly insoluble difficulty of Original Sin, of disorder in our world handed down from an inaccessible past, is finally overcome. It is overcome because at the heart of this fresh creative process now emerging in the humanity of the Man Jesus, there functions the time-transcending power of God Himself. There is no element whatever in the *content* of the humanity of Our Lord which was not first present and available within

the natural human world.<sup>10</sup> But these elements of humanity are now taken by the fresh exercise of divine creative power into a perfected *pattern* of relationships, a pattern unvitiated by any disorder, whether of original or of actual sin. For the first time in the history of a disordered creation the elements of human nature are taken out of their disordered contexts, both in the present and the past, and into that perfected pattern which is fully proper to them. All the potentialities of human nature are thus perfectly actualized within the new individual human unit called Jesus of Nazareth. Perfect Man is created anew from the elements of God's old creation. And this newly created human unit is made to emerge through God's method of a creative clothing of all the requisite elements of human nature upon His very Self.

#### METHOD OF THE INCARNATION: ITS SOCIAL ORGANISM

This re-creative process is thus initiated through the individual human unit called the Man Jesus. But clearly it does not cease to operate at the physical boundaries of that unit. This Man is not an isolated—still less, an insulated—individual. From the moment of His birth—even from His conception—He knits to Himself in close human relationships other members of the human race. God the Son thus extends His re-creative vital power into a new and spreading *social* entity. Social relationships involving other human beings begin to be taken into that perfected pattern of a re-created humanity with which the Divine Logos continues to clothe Himself. The living body of the individual human unit begins to be extended into a living social body. The divine creative power spreads outward in unbroken continuity with the individual Jesus but now further to inform and fashion a new social creation.

The first human being to be thus directly incorporated within the social humanity of the Divine Son was, of course, His own mother. But there followed other men and women in a growing, spreading succession. Finally, the years of

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<sup>10</sup> But see discussion of *Miracles*, pp. 42ff.

Our Lord's intensive public ministry were primarily applied to the incorporation of a selected group of men into the body of His enlarging social humanity. And the initial seed or nucleus of this re-created social world was composed of those twelve men whom He called His friends, the Apostles. From this nucleus, in turn, there began to spread abroad—and there still spreads down through the centuries—that new, vital, re-created social organism, Our Lord's extending Incarnation, the Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church.

It is very important for the future of this discussion to keep in mind the organic nature of the social extension of Our Lord's humanity. If we fail to do this, we shall be in danger of thinking of His Church as a mere society of human beings. But it is infinitely more than this. Many great leaders in many fields of human endeavor have founded societies to carry forward their purposes. They have set up organizations to implement their teachings and these organizations have often survived their founders by many years. But Our Lord did not merely found an organization. He planted an Organism. Upon this Society God bestowed His Holy Spirit to inform it and to constitute it a *living* entity. The Holy Spirit, dwelling within the Church, gives to it an utterly unique character among all other human organizations. He gives to this Society what amounts to a kind of biological organic continuity with Our Lord's individual humanity. And so the growth of the body of the Church is in very truth the growth of the living body of Jesus Christ clothing Himself thus, beyond His individual humanity, with the humanity of all other men who are willing to be incorporated into it.

#### SUMMARY: SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEMS OF TIME AND OF THE CONSERVATION OF HUMAN FREEDOM

It is in this way that both of those difficulties, which as we have seen arise in the restoration of a reperfected order to the life of fallen man, are completely and yet uncompromisingly met.

Firstly, the time-transcending creative power of God does

really appear and does begin to operate among men. It is applied to the restoration of an order in human life entirely unvitiated by evils inherited out of the past. God does reach into the created world to supply a re-creative life force transcending the time-bound powers of unaided man. But, secondly, this necessary divine power is not applied to man's world directly and unmediated as from an outside source. It is not applied in what we would today call the fascist manner. The traditional "Messiah method" is not employed. Instead, the necessary re-creative power *emerges within* the human world. In this way God finds it possible not merely not to damage or destroy, but to complete and consummate man's own rational powers in so far as these remain available to His re-creative purpose. The method chosen is such that the rational freedom of man, in so far as this can still supply genuine elements of value in the redeeming process, is never overruled. It is, rather, utilized to its utmost capacity. It is then consummated and crowned within Our Lord's body in such wise that it becomes an integral factor in the redemption of human life—a redemption which, of course, God's creative power alone ultimately completes.

#### OUR LADY THE PROTOTYPE OF REDEEMED AND FREE HUMANITY

The first sign and symbol of man's free allegiance and consent to the entering in of God as a re-creative Agent within His fallen world is the consent of Our Lady Mary to the initiation of the Incarnation. She was not compelled to give this consent. And this is why her reply to the Angel of the Annunciation, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word, is in a sense the new charter of human freedom kept inviolate, even as God omnipotent Himself initiates the work of the redeeming re-creation of His world. But following her consent, all other human individuals who have subsequently been taken into Our Lord's body have, without exception, had first to make a like rational act of free allegiance. No in-

dividual has ever been compelled by God to answer the summons of His Son in His humanity when He issues the invitation: Follow me.

But then, once this free consent is given to the invitation, the individual involved immediately finds himself incorporated in a living, growing process, a social body whose re-creative vitality utterly transcends those fragmentary, time-frustrated rational powers which were all that he commanded before that consent. He finds himself incorporated as an ordered and completely functional element in the extension of Our Lord's humanity. He becomes as much an organic part of that social humanity as the hands and feet of Our Lord are organs of His own individual human unit. Those who are taken into this body are, as Our Lord Himself said, genuine branches of that vine of which He is the root and stem, and of which the Divine Logos is the creative vital force.

#### INCARNATIONAL DEFINITION OF REDEMPTION

In the Christian view, then, the disordered world shall be redeemed as its elements are taken into Our Lord's social body, much as the elements of soil and air are taken into the living fabric of a vine. The elements of such a new, living structure will be identifiable as the same elements which they were while still random and disorganized (unredeemed) in surrounding soil and air. But, by virtue of their incorporation into the vine, they receive through Our Lord's creative power, a divinely ordered social state of being. Furthermore, this new social state of being reacts in turn upon them individually in such wise that a totally new living organism emerges, with the human elements therein, previously dispersed and unrelated, receiving a newly bestowed common life by virtue of their new and functional individual relationships to the living vine.

Christian redemption, therefore, is first manifested under the form of a new and divine living organism within this world. And this organism is itself manifested outwardly as a re-creative social process in history. It is visibly mani-

fested as a human organization dedicated to the radical reordering or re-creation of the world. But, in its essence, this organization is infinitely more than a mere human society, just as a living vine is in no sense adequately characterized merely as an ordered association or agglomeration of its chemical components. No mere putting together of carbon, nitrogen, hydrogen, phosphorus, and other elements will produce a living being. The vine utilizes these elements, but the vine itself must spring from a corresponding living seed which is its source and origin. So likewise the social body of Christ springs from His individual humanity as its source and, by virtue of the indwelling of God the Holy Spirit, it grows outward from that source in a living social continuity entirely analogous to the continuity between a vine and its seed.

The living body of the Incarnation, growing in the midst of the human world, utilizes human beings as the structural elements of its fabric. Human beings do not create it any more than carbon and nitrogen create a vine. But, as has been said, human beings, because of their rational nature, must freely permit themselves to be utilized by Our Lord in His body. Furthermore, this kind of free consent is not merely initial. It must be continuously reaffirmed

- by all the several individuals involved, since human freedom itself is one of the elements of which the corporate organism has need within its own living structure. Thus any individual in the world may refuse to lend himself as an element for the use of the divine organism. Or, he may even enter the growing vine and subsequently permit his allegiance to lapse. But the point is, that while he remains faithful to it, in so far as he really *is* within it, his own previously inadequate powers are organically subsumed within the divine life of the social vine, and thus fully actualized by a living, time-transcending, creative power of which no unaided human being could ever dare to dream.

The disordered world will be redeemed only as its men and women, in ever increasing numbers, give themselves wholly to this social process of the Incarnation. It will be redeemed when free men submit their several freedoms

wholly to the use of that corporate social body of Our Lord which spreads outward as a vine from the seed first implanted in the world under the form of the individual human body of the Incarnate God.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> There emerges here the problem of the tension between a continuing individual freedom and total incorporation of individuals into a divine social organism. The manner in which this is solved within the Incarnation is discussed at a later point.

### III

## The Problem of the Redemption of the World: Second Stage

### THE REDEMPTION OF MAN CARRIES BEYOND THE NATURAL WORLD

ONCE WE HAVE CLEARLY GRASPED the foregoing peculiarly Christian truth, we are ready to proceed with an investigation of what may be called a second stage of the process of the restoration of God's creation to the fullness of His intention for it. This restoration necessarily begins upon the level of the natural world in which fallen man now lives. It begins with the restoration of a living, functional order to human life, both individual and social, here and now. And the method of this restoration is that of taking all human life which will respond to it into that living process of the Incarnation, Our Lord's spreading humanity, which now extends itself vinewise in the time succession of human history. But the restoration of a new and perfected order to human life within our natural world, although it is the foundation of human salvation, does not, and cannot, suffice to fulfil all the potentialities latent in the nature of man. What is called the salvation of man, even within the social humanity of God Incarnate, cannot be fully accomplished upon the level of the natural world only. In other words, even if our present order, in its social, economic, and political aspects, were wholly reperfected in an organically living society informed with the creative power of God—even in such a divine society, the highest human potentialities of man would still remain unsatisfied. And this, we shall see, is tantamount to saying that to hold the redemption of man entirely within the boundaries of a mere reperfection of this world is ultimately

as frustrating and worthless as to make no move in that direction whatever!<sup>12</sup>

### THE LIMITATIONS OF PERFECTION ATTAINABLE IN THE NATURAL WORLD

To understand the meaning of this assertion it is best to return to an examination of that perfected humanity exhibited in the individual manhood of Our Lord.

It is in this individual unit of humanity that the reperfection of the human social order has its initiation and its source, and we may truly say that this arch-unit of the whole process of the Incarnation which spreads outward from it was a Perfect Man. But in what sense do we here employ this word "perfect"? Do we mean that the humanity of the Man Jesus was perfect in an ultimate, in an absolute sense? Or are we here using the notion of perfection in some lesser, some limited, or some contingent application? It is clear that the latter is the case. For the manhood of Jesus, so long as He remained within the necessary limits of the world of our present natural life, was perfect only in a sense which rather obviously falls short of a consummation which can be characterized as an ultimate or absolute perfection. When we examine, one by one, the various elements which go to fill in the structure of His human accomplishment, we can easily see that these, considered in and of themselves alone, are more often than not far from perfect, even in any sense whatever of that word. Certainly the various and manifold items which give content to the pattern of His individual humanity, seem at first glance utterly inconsistent with anything describable as an absolute perfection. When we look back upon Our Lord's earthly life as a whole, we find within its completed structure elements of weariness and disap-

<sup>12</sup> At this point the divergence between Humanist (e.g. Communist) and Christian concepts is most apparent. The Humanist contention would be that the improvement (or perfection) of the human social order not only can, but must suffice for man's final good—since nothing more than this, nothing beyond this world is in any case available.

pointment, of poverty and pain, of the experience of being misunderstood and rejected by the majority of His own people. We find Him misapprehended even by His disciples, His most intimate and constant friends. And at the close of His life, we find betrayal by a trusted member of the group of His followers; we find an experience of unparalleled injustice under the circumstances of an almost farcical judicial trial, a trial engineered and presided over by the authorities of His very own nation. We find the infliction of shameful indignities, coupled with mockery and physical torture. Finally, this whole life-pattern culminates in a conspiratorial condemnation at the hands of those to whom Our Lord willed nothing but good, and in an agonizing felon's death by crucifixion on the hill of Calvary.

How is the word "perfection" to be applied to such a life? Certainly it appears at best a terrible and tragic perfection. We may well question whether this can be presented as the absolute prototype of what is called the salvation of man. We have said that the redemption of God's world as understood by Christians begins in its re-creation, its functional reintegration here and now. But when we see this process successfully carried through in the case of the Man Jesus, the result of such a re-creative effort, while it excites our awesome homage, appalls us by its ineluctable tragedy. To the rational human mind this seems a perfection almost to be avoided, rather than to be espoused. And it is still more disconcerting to reflect that in some mysterious way it was Our Lord's own perfection of pattern itself which, under the circumstances of His life, both invited and required its correspondingly tragic content. What kind of perfection is this which seems to say that the more of it we achieve, the worse off we shall be?

#### REDEEMED PERFECTION IN THIS WORLD ALWAYS CONTINGENT

The seeming contradiction here lies in an equivocal use of the word. For when we term something perfect, we may, as a matter of fact, be referring to its pattern alone, or to its pattern and content considered together. We shall

fall into confusion if we make no distinction here. This can be seen from a simple geometrical illustration. Suppose, for example, we mark out a square on a flat board. In our material world, this square may be defined by drawing lines, or merely by placing four objects at the points which determine its corners. In this latter case suppose we select for our marking-objects four small apples. If we arrange these with care, we may look at our handiwork and say with accuracy that we have marked out a perfect square. In making this observation we have made no judgment whatever about either the nature or the quality of the objects used to determine the square pattern. We are evaluating the pattern alone, without regard to the content. It is possible that the only apples available at the moment were malformed, withered, or wormy. Nevertheless, they will serve just as well for the purpose of markers, as if they were prize apples from a fruit fair. We can still call the design perfect if we are careful to confine the judgment to the geometrical pattern before us.

But if we are considering the square as a material object, a concrete thing with both pattern and content together, we cannot call such a design marked out with imperfect apples perfect in an ultimate or absolute sense. Its form may be perfect, but its content is still gravely deficient.

It is this kind of perfection of pattern which we find in the humanity of Our Lord. The use He made of the "materials" of His lived experience, the integration and order which He achieved among all the elements of rational human nature—these things were perfect, and it is in this sense that He was a Perfect Man. But the materials with which He worked, the elements of human nature as these had to be actualized in individual and social experience, had to be selected from among the actions and experiences available to Him as He lived under the conditions of a particular time and situation. Now these elements were limited in number, and of this limited number, many of them were imperfect and disordered, if they be considered in and of themselves. They included, among others, the experiences of frustration, betrayal, agony and death. We

cannot, therefore, call the humanity of Our Lord perfect in an absolute sense. His perfect manhood is a perfection of pattern, a perfection of integrated use and purpose for all the elements which fulfil its content. It is a perfection of *order*; but the "things ordered" within this pattern, like the apples marking out our hypothetical square, are themselves still very far from perfect. And this kind of perfection of order which utilizes still imperfect materials to "mark out" its design and to fill in its structure, is called a *contingent* perfection. It is not an *absolute* perfection. It is only in this contingent sense that Our Lord is properly described as Perfect Man.

Furthermore, these same kinds of limitations and contingencies will always be found within the structure of that social humanity of Our Lord which, growing from Him, continues and enlarges His re-creative work. For at this very time, for example, many sections and groups of people, the members of a whole exploiting economic class, are rich, powerful, and exceedingly comfortable within this fallen world on the basis of sins and disorders which a capitalist economic order assumes as normal and proper—in fact, essential—to its industrial and commercial organization. Great numbers of people—whether through actual blindness to the structural economic disorders in which they are enmeshed or through deliberate choice is no great matter—are sure to resist bitterly, even murderously, the encroachment of the body of Our Lord. For this body will threaten to engulf them, radically to reorganize their present individual and social lives. It will threaten to appropriate them, as it were for food, to the purpose of its own divine, redeeming life. It is therefore almost certain that many of the immediate elements which Christians will be compelled to utilize to mark out, or to clothe, the new structural pattern of that growing vine of which they are functional parts will be, as in Our Lord's individual case, those of encountered violence, of privations, and of seeming defeats. In the end, furthermore, all of us must reckon with that final blank defeat which, without exception or cure, characterizes every man's state within a fallen world. We must reckon with our own individual deaths.

## HUMAN SALVATION REQUIRES AN ABSOLUTE PERFECTION

It is both because of such difficulties inevitable within every move towards the reperfection of the pattern of our present world, and because of certain other entirely ineradicable contingencies, the ultimate one of which is natural death, that even a revolutionary reperfection of our natural world order cannot suffice for the salvation of man. For human nature has potentialities which can find their full fruition only through the perfection of the *content* of experience, a process going far beyond the perfection of a life pattern which still remains loaded with bitter contingencies. Human nature can be fully redeemed only when sorrow gives place to joy, frustration to fulfilment, suffering to well-being, defeat to victory, death itself to eternal life. In short, the salvation of man requires the bestowal of an absolute perfection. Man's salvation must have, it would seem, some kind of second stage. Its first stage begins clearly in the re-creation of this world, a social process initiated in Our Lord's humanity. But this first stage leaves us with the problems of all those contingencies which we have now canvassed. And this is why we can say that to be left within the boundaries of the first stage of the redemption process must, in final analysis, prove perhaps even more frustrating than to have made no move whatever in that direction.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> This analysis is in sharp contrast with the Humanist view, which seems at this time undisturbed by the stark and irreducible facts of innocent suffering and individual death within this world. For the moment, this problem, if faced at all, is superficially solved by emphasizing the well-being of future generations purchased by present struggle, suffering and death. But it seems humanly certain that suffering of certain kinds will persist in future generations, even when the revolutionary struggle is past. And it is a complete certainty that we must reckon with individual death. According to every sane scientific evidence available, furthermore, we must reckon with the eventual extinction of the human race as a whole and of the universe itself. Can rational man find an encouraging validation of his present heroic struggles in that final, cold defeat? To consider this situation seriously and rigorously is a chilling enterprise. The problem, on this level of thought, can really be got around only by deliberately banishing it from the mind.

## THE MEDIATION OF THE CONTINGENT INTO THE ABSOLUTE: THE TWO NATURES OF OUR LORD

The solution of this problem too, the necessary second stage of man's redemption, is also supplied by God in the Incarnation of His Son. We therefore return to the fundamental fact of this Incarnation. Let us recall that it is the Divine Logos, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, who initiates the entire process by clothing Himself with the perfected individual humanity of the Man Jesus. The divine nature therefore inheres in this Person as He becomes Incarnate. But in the Manhood which He takes into Himself there also inheres true human nature, with all its necessary limitations and contingencies. Both natures are thus inseparably conjoined through the fact that in the Incarnation they have come to inhere in one and the same Divine Person. But it is the pattern of the human nature which was fulfilled and perfected by Our Lord under the conditions of His earthly life. And it is within this perfected human pattern that we still find remaining those contingencies which balk its claim to that absolute perfection which alone befits the ultimate salvation of humanity.

It is at this point that Our Lord accomplishes that which would be clearly impossible to any mere human creature. For in Him, that which is perfected in pattern under the conditions of our time and space, can be received into the timeless and spaceless level of His own divinity. That pattern which is perfected under the conditions of human mortality is received into the level of the divine eternity. That which is perfected as a pattern of human nature is received im-mediatel\*y\* (i.e. without any intervening medium), by virtue of the conjunction of the two natures in Our Lord, into the level of His divine nature.

It is doubtless because of this unique, im-mediate union in one Person of the human and the divine natures that

\* *Im-mediatel\*y\** is written here and elsewhere with a hyphen in order to emphasize its primary meaning of "without a mediating agent," and to avoid confusion with its derived temporal sense of "at once" or "right way," which is not intended in this context.

Our Lord could refer to Himself under such terms as the door and the way into eternal life. For it is uniquely in Him, as He becomes Incarnate, that the divine and human natures are brought into a perfect conjunction. All other human beings, possessing only the human nature, have need of being mediated into the level of the divine. Therefore for them the only hope for a renewed union with God is to be received into Our Lord's humanity, and by virtue of this reception to be united in and through this humanity to the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity. Our Lord is the only bridge across which a human creature in time may gain access to the level of eternity. This is made possible as every one of us, as every other individual unit of actualized human nature, is engrafted functionally into the spreading social humanity of Our Lord. For it is only His humanity (not ours) which by His Incarnation is united with divinity. In this respect, therefore, He is our *only* Mediator.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Our Lord is, quite exactly, said to be our only mediator. He is not, however, our only intercessor. Any Christian may intercede for any number of other Christians or for the Church and the world. And the Saints in heaven certainly should be asked to intercede for those of us who still fight the warfare of the Church Militant here in earth.

## IV

### Mediation As Sacrifice

#### FAILURE OF PRE-CHRISTIAN SACRIFICES

THIS KIND OF MEDIATION, whereby a pattern of humanity perfected upon the level of our natural world is conveyed into the level of the absolute perfection of its ultimate redemption, is called a process of sacrifice.

From the very dawn of religious consciousness men have always striven to find access to such a process of mediation. It is therefore no accident that they have instinctively offered sacrifices as the central activity of their religious observance and worship. To this end they have ever sought to offer something good, something valuable, something chosen as a perfected unit from among the materials of their own world. They have thus striven to give to their gods, under these material forms, certain concreted, acceptably perfected structures of human life and activity. Sometimes the things chosen have been objects of gold, of silver, or of jewels. Sometimes they have been perfumes and incense, sometimes the flesh of carefully selected and solemnly slaughtered animals. Sometimes they have been other articles of food and drink. Sometimes they have even been other human beings. The religion of Our Lord's own nation, His religion, was a religion of sacrifice.

The difficulty always had been, up to the appearance of God Incarnate Himself, that the organized structures of human life put forward by men's creative efforts were never so perfected within the contingent level of this world, that they were capable of being conveyed into the absolute level of man's ultimate redemption. The reason for this we have already seen. Unaided man, caught in the disordered time process of a fallen world, is inhibited from preparing an adequately perfected offering.

All earlier sacrifices, therefore—even the sacrifices of Israel—while they clearly pointed the direction of what needed to be done, were not able to accomplish it. As the greatest Hebrew Prophets began to see, sacrifice was necessary for man's redemption; but that perfected structure required for a sacrifice which could actually over-pass the barrier between a fallen world, disordered in the historical time process, and the absolute level of the eternal and the divine, could not be made available in our natural order by man.<sup>15</sup>

### OUR LORD'S SACRIFICE: THE FULL ATTAINMENT OF ITS END

It was Our Lord alone, who, by virtue of His solution of the time-problem in His Incarnation, was able to prepare in His own individual humanity a re-created unit for a sacrifice which could move through the necessary transit from the natural to the super-natural levels. And furthermore He was able to effect this transit by virtue of the perfect union in Him of the divine and human natures. This is why He is indeed our only Mediator. The final offering was made, and the final transit was consummated, upon the Cross. And this is what is meant by the expression, "The Sacrifice of the Cross."

Our Lord, considered under the aspect of His individual humanity, is spoken of as Victim or Host in this Sacrifice. This is parallel with the terminology of all other and earlier sacrifices in which animals, put forward by various human groups to epitomize their own attempts at a re-created perfection, were called victims.

The conveyance of a contingently perfected unit into the level of the absolute, is essentially a priestly action. It is

<sup>15</sup> St. Paul often deals with this problem in his various letters. Of all the writers of either the Old or the New Testaments, he seems most clearly to have understood the difficulty. He usually attacks the problem in terms of an analysis of the relation of the efficacy of the Law of the Old Covenant to its fulfilment in the New Covenant in Jesus Christ. See, for example, his Letter to the Galatians, Chapter 3. Here the finest theological thinker of all time fairly wrestles with his problem. In this field of thought he is the first intellectual pioneer.

an act of mediation between the natural and super-natural levels of being. The official representative of any group who acts in its behalf in the capacity of effecting such a transit is called a priest. Our Lord, therefore, in His capacity of effecting the transit of His individual, earthly humanity into the eternal level of His divine nature is spoken of as Priest. The place of a sacrifice is commonly called an altar.

Hence, on the Cross, Our Lord is properly called both Priest and Victim. And the closing event of Our Lord's life, because of the manner of His execution and death, is called the Sacrifice upon the Altar of the Cross.

### THE EFFECTS OF MEDIATING SACRIFICE

Let us now see what happens to a perfected pattern of human nature, the items of whose content still evince many limitations and contingencies, when such a contingent structure passes over into the super-natural level of the divine nature. This can be most conveniently seen as we compare the risen Lord with that same Lord as He hung dying upon the Cross.

Here on the Cross we find the consummation of the full content of the structure of Our Lord's earthly life. Here is the fullness of His Sacrifice. Here the perfected pattern of His individual actualization of human nature is presented in its totality (including in its content the event of natural death itself) as a final oblation to God the Father. At the death on the Cross, this perfectly ordered structure, created within the conditions of our world and with its content drawn from that same world, passes completely into the level of the divine nature. In the subsequent resurrection we see what occurs in such a transit. For after the resurrection Our Lord's humanity appears not only perfected (as it was before) in pattern; it is now perfected in content as well. For example, that which was an item of defeat within its structure in the natural order becomes victory within the super-natural order of the divine nature. Even the physical body, previously subject to the contingencies of time and space, becomes completely inde-

pendent of these physical dimensions. That which was failure becomes the assurance of success. That which was sorrow and weariness becomes joy and thanksgiving. Fear becomes courage; misunderstanding and timid confusion in the relations with His immediate followers become complete clarity and vigorous determination. The human dereliction at the last moment before death on the Cross becomes the consciousness of complete union with God. Natural death itself emerges as risen and eternal life. This is the way of the second stage of human salvation.

#### CONTINGENT PERFECTION AS THE NECESSARY BASIS OF ABSOLUTE PERFECTION

It is very important for our understanding of the discussion which now follows that we grasp the full meaning of the foregoing relationships. We often think of the events of the Cross and resurrection in terms of a mere sequence in time. We think of defeat as *followed* by victory; sorrow as *followed* by joy; death as *followed* by life. But this way of thinking misses a fundamental truth. For example, the element of sorrow as one item giving content to Our Lord's humanity (marking it out, as we have put it) is not merely *superseded* by joy, as He carries His humanity into the level of His divinity. It happens, rather, that the very thing which was sorrow itself, in this transit from the natural to the super-natural levels, becomes the very joy of His risen life. As He Himself said to His disciples: Your sorrow shall be *turned into* (not, *be superseded by*) joy.<sup>16</sup> So likewise the natural, material human body becomes the transcendent risen body. Defeat becomes victory; natural death becomes eternal life. Likewise with every other contingent item which fulfils the pattern of His human nature, it is re-ordered, and it then reappears as the corresponding absolutely perfected item in that same nature when, risen from the tomb, Our Lord conveys this within the level of His divine nature. Each and every one of these contingent items is the necessary natural foundation out of which are prepared the corresponding items of an absolutely

<sup>16</sup> John 16: 20.

perfected humanity. And without these foundations laid in our natural order, their absolutely perfected counterparts could not possibly emerge. Thus the first stage of man's salvation, the preparation of a contingently perfected pattern of human nature within this world, is the very foundation stuff out of which man's absolute perfection—his ultimate salvation—is built. So far as human beings are concerned, the life-materials of our time and space, perfected in pattern on the level of this world, and within Our Lord's natural humanity, form the structure which He conveys into the level of His divine nature. The second stage of man's salvation—his salvation's super-natural and absolute consummation—therefore presupposes the completion of the first stage; for the second stage not only builds upon, but *with* that which is accomplished in the first stage. It builds with a newly created, ordered pattern of humanity brought to some kind of adequate fulfilment while men are still within this world.

# V

## Metacosmesis

### REMARKABLE QUALITIES OF OUR LORD'S EARTHLY HUMANITY

THE EFFECTS OF THE TRANSIT of the perfected but contingent pattern of the individual human unit called Jesus into the level of the divine nature of the eternal Christ are most readily seen in His own death and resurrection. Yet once we have grasped this function of the union of the two natures in Our Lord, we are in a position to discern something of this same kind of dynamic interchange between them even before His death, throughout the whole course of His earthly life. His two natures, from the moment of His conception, were completely distinct. But, because they are perfectly conjoined in Him, every experience and action which was added to the content of His pattern as a man, also underwent at once that transit which conveyed it into the absolute level of His divine nature. As Our Lord the Man lived and moved and re-created His own fresh individual unit of humanity out of the materials presented to Him within our world, the first stage of human salvation was at once made absolute in that completing second stage which His divine nature at every instant im-medately supplied.

Because during His earthly life the senses of men had direct access only to the manifestation of Our Lord's earthly human nature, this kind of ever-present and continuing consummation was not readily apparent to human observation. It became openly clear only after the resurrection. Nevertheless, we can gain at least an inkling of such a process of interchange between the respective levels of the two natures when we study the really extraordinary quality of the individual humanity of the Man Jesus. For although we properly describe this humanity in terms of Perfect

Man, it does undeniably have certain characteristics which we have never found associated with any other man. For there radiate from this humanity a power, an authority, a command over men's minds and wills and imaginations, an insight into the deepest realities and needs of the human heart, which appear to transcend the gifts and wisdoms of all other known men, not merely quantitatively, but qualitatively. Furthermore, Our Lord performed many mighty works, miracles of healing and even of over-ruling control in the presence of the forces of nature. At one point in His life, His physical body itself seems to have assumed in the presence of human witnesses a definitely super-physical property and appearance. And crowning all this He made the extraordinary claim, as the Son of Man, that He had power on earth to forgive sin. And whatever may have been the precise technical meaning of the expression Son of Man in this context, there seems little doubt that although the authority of this forgiveness did not originate in Our Lord's humanity alone, nevertheless the absolution given to other men did come in and through that humanity.<sup>17</sup> Such phenomenal powers as those of the performance of miracles, of the transfiguration of the natural body, and above all, of the dispensing of forgiveness of other men's sins here on earth, are not associated with what we might call "normal" humanity.

### OUR LORD'S HUMANITY A TRUE HUMANITY

For this reason it is often widely assumed that these seemingly super-human powers which Our Lord not only claimed in words, but exercised in amazing deeds, resulted from a kind of sporadic but direct irruption of the divine through the natural level of His normal human life. The difficulty with this view is that it seems unavoidably to imply that Our Lord while on earth was not describable

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<sup>17</sup> The Jewish Scribes who were present when Our Lord made this claim seem to have understood that Our Lord presumed to attribute the power of forgiveness of sin to Himself as mere man. They were shocked—and quite properly. They termed this claim a blasphemy. The power to forgive sins can originate only with God.

completely and accurately in terms of Perfect Man alone. At some moments at least He was a superman. For sometimes He could call in at will a divine power which seems to have lurked somewhere in the background of His life in order, as it were, to eke out His merely human powers which, although humanly perfect, were sometimes inadequate fully to meet the requirements of His peculiar mission among men. And a view of Our Lord which would allow that He thus injected divine elements directly into and through the content of His true humanity in such wise that the divine overrode the human, and that divinity impinged im-medately upon the natural world, places the historical Man Jesus in such an exceptional category from all other men that He becomes a being apart. He becomes a pattern of "human" nature inaccessible to ordinary men. His perfection becomes a thing too lofty for the rest of us, not only in degree but in kind. If the perfection to which He calls us, as exemplified in His own human achievement, requires this kind of divine intrusion to complete it, He calls us not to joy and hope in Himself, but to a kind of despair. For He seems to be calling us to a redemption which is not based initially on a genuine reperfection of human nature alone, but rather to a kind of super-perfection. At any rate, it is a kind of perfection open to no man other than Himself, since no other man in difficult moments can ever have the power of Very God thus conveniently on tap.

Fortunately, Our Lord has made it clear that this was not His own view of His extraordinary powers as a man among men. He implies that the remarkable qualities of His humanity are under certain circumstances proper to the potentialities of all humanity. He startles us by suggesting that the powers which emerge in Him as man ought not to be thought of as uniquely confined to His single case. When the disciples marvelled over the withering away of a fig tree at a word from Him, He replied: If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be cast into the sea, it shall be done.<sup>18</sup> These

<sup>18</sup> Matt. 21: 19-21. Cf. also, 17:20; Luke 17: 6; Mark 11: 23.

are certainly strong words.

But the disciples and the early Church with them were at least willing to take them at their face value. This is proved by the words attributed to Our Lord when the early Christians supplied a written passage to take the place of the so-called lost ending of St. Mark's Gospel. We gather that to the Christians of the early second century it seemed quite fitting that Our Lord should say to them that they should take up poisonous serpents with impunity, that if they drank any deadly thing it would not hurt them, and that they too should heal the sick. For St. John had already reported Our Lord as saying: He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do.<sup>19</sup>

#### SOURCE OF THE REMARKABLE QUALITY OF OUR LORD'S HUMANITY

What then is this humanity? It does not seem to be ordinary humanity; yet we do have the surprising assurance both of Our Lord and His immediate followers that powers and masteries over the elements of our world which we almost unhesitatingly label super-natural, are potentially normal to that human nature which is the possession of all other men. It would seem then, that we are here in the presence of the manifestation of a pattern of true human nature. But it is a humanity which, having been perfected within the natural level of this world, has been received and made absolute within the level of the divine nature. *From this super-natural level it has been returned to the natural level to continue a further growth, to garner in a still larger contingent content within this world.* Our Lord's humanity is certainly a true humanity. It is not a humanity which from its beginning had always been potentially higher, in some unique and qualitative sense, from that of other men. But it is a humanity which, as we view it at any point in His earthly life, has been *in and out of eternity*. It is a humanity which has been perfected in pattern in the first

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<sup>19</sup> Mark 16: 17-18; John 14: 12.

stage of the redemption process of the Incarnation, which has been im-medately consummated in the second stage, but which (since Our Lord still lives His human life within this world) is then returned in order that its contingent content may be enlarged by further growth within the still continuing first stage. And this kind of *back and forth* transit of a perfected human accomplishment from the level of Our Lord's human nature to the level of His divine nature, and then back again to the natural level for further activity and growth, results in a humanity which has the remarkable qualities shown by that of the Man Jesus. In Him, at any chosen moment of His human life, we see a unit of humanity perfectly re-created in pattern under the conditions of this natural world. We see this contingent accomplishment made absolute, up to that point, in His divinity. We see this absolutely perfected accomplishment returned to the level of our world, as a basis for the continuation of whatever future contingent creative work is still allotted to Our Lord before the time shall come for His human death upon the Cross.

A pattern of humanity which has been contingently perfected in the level of our nature; which with its content has been absolutely perfected by being received into the level of divinity; which has then been returned to the same individual human being who first perfected it while He still continues to function further within this world, gives to that particular human being the extraordinary characteristics of Our Lord as Man. It is, nevertheless, a true humanity—not a super-humanity. Although it has been received into the divine level it does not remain withdrawn from the world of men; neither is it continually held above it. Neither does it return trailing some admixture of the divine nature mingled with the human. It is still a genuine humanity; but one which has been consummated in eternity and then returned to the world of time. There it continues to function again, with certain uncommon properties to be sure, but none the less re-emerging as a unit of that true human nature which is potentially proper to all other men. Our Lord as Man is a unit of humanity first perfected as an

ordered structure within this world. But in His case, even before the final conveyance of this unit into the absolute perfection of His risen life, its content is receiving, continuously and at every point, a kind of interim consummation of a sort equivalent to that consummation which is so clearly manifest in the great final event. But this kind of interim consummation must proceed behind the veil, as it were, of Our Lord's still continuing earthly life. And while His earthly life endures, this consummated, absolutely perfected portion of His creative accomplishment is always *given back into* the level of His continuing human activity. It there imparts to His human life its seemingly super-human qualities.

But these qualities are not super-human. The miracles of Our Lord are not a direct action intrusion of His divinity, interrupting cataclysmically the course of His purely human activity. The miracles are wrought by a genuinely human being. They are wrought by a truly human unit, but one which has traversed both of the necessary stages of man's redemption, yet which still continues to grow and work within the natural world.

This kind of human individual can work the miracles recorded in the Gospel accounts. This kind of human individual has that pre-eminent control over the material circumstances of life which permits the event of the transfiguration, when we find His absolutely perfected humanity shining for a moment through the veil of its this-world, contingently perfected, but still not finally consummated structure. This kind of human individual can mediate God's own healing of body to the cure of the bodies of other men. This kind of human individual, as Son of Man within this world, can dispense God's forgiveness of sin to the cure of other men's souls.

Briefly, then, we can discern three phases, or stages, in Our Lord's creative action while He lives within this world. First, the Divine Logos, by virtue of His time-transcending, creative power, re-creates an individual pattern of true human nature by ordering the elements of that nature out of their fallen (i.e. from the merely human standpoint,

hopelessly disordered) state. These elements are taken into an individual human structure which conforms perfectly to the will of God for His creature, man. This is the proto-phase of what must be always the first basis of the redeeming work of God in the Incarnation of His Son.

But this first stage in the redemption of human nature results in a contingent perfection whose content, like that of our previously mentioned square marked out with imperfect apples, still has need of being perfected in an absolute sense. The second stage therefore consists precisely in this, the making absolute of that contingently perfected structure which results from the first stage of Our Lord's action. And this necessary completion of the redemption of human nature is accomplished by Our Lord by virtue of the fact that in Him the divine and human natures are conjoined. Hence that ordered structure which is perfected in this natural world, under the conditions of our time and space, is conveyed im-mediate-ly into the eternal level of Our Lord's divinity. It there receives that consummation of an absolutely perfected order which ultimate human redemption requires.

This fully redeemed structure is then returned (or re-conveyed) into the continuing human life of the Man Jesus, in such wise that His creative accomplishment, up to each moment of His earthly life, re-emerges in the natural level, but now as an absolutely perfected basis for His remaining, allotted future creative work within the still unfinished first stage of His redeeming mission.

#### DEFINITION OF METACOSMESIS

We shall call this process a process of *Metacosmesis*.<sup>20</sup> Metacosmesis, then, is a kind of trans-ordering, a conveyance of structural order from the level of contingency in

<sup>20</sup> Pronounced *Metacosmesis*; from the Greek *μετά*, as a prefix expressing "change," and *κόσμησις*, "an ordering." Plato (*Laws*, 892.A) uses *μετακόμησις* in the sense of a "new arrangement." The word occurs also in Plutarch (*Moralia*, 2. 75 E) in the sense of "a conversion." The Sacramental application, of course, greatly extends the classical sense.

time and space to the level of an absolute and eternal order; and then back again to that contingent level where it originated and to which it returns for further creative, ordering, growth.

Metacosmesis might be called by its Latin equivalent, Trans-ordination. The difficulty with the Latin term seems to be that it suggests merely a change in purpose or use of our renewed structural order, an ordaining it to a new end. But we are dealing here with a process of radical, creative *structural re-ordering*. "Trans-ordering" would be a nearer equivalent to the Greek word. We shall here retain the term *Metacosmesis*.<sup>21</sup>

#### SOCIAL EXTENSION OF METACOSMESIS DURING OUR LORD'S EARTHLY LIFE

During the course of Our Lord's earthly life, it was not alone the strictly individually perfected structure of His humanity which underwent this process of Metacosmesis. As a matter of fact there is no strictly individual content of any individual humanity. All human beings are social beings. The practical experiences, intellectual analyses, and emotional attitudes which fill in the structures of individual lives almost without exception have connections with other members of the social environment within which individual lives are passed. Every man or woman is a focus or center of a life-structure which diffuses socially outward. It thus involves within itself and as a part of its individual

<sup>21</sup> In a previous book (*Manhood Into God*, 1940), I have attempted to make the traditional theological term *Transubstantiation* cover the whole process now described as Metacosmesis. I have come to the conclusion that this stretching of a highly technical term, one which has been so carefully defined by St. Thomas Aquinas, and so thoroughly enshrined in a limited Catholic usage, is inadmissible. That particular process which is described by the word Transubstantiation is certainly a necessary part of Catholic belief. I by no means reject the truth which it so accurately enshrines. It is impossible to see how the full truth concerning the movement of the process of the Blessed Sacrament could be otherwise expressed. The concept of Metacosmesis presupposes Transubstantiation. But I have ceased to think it feasible to try to make this latter term do double duty, and to cover the entire process now described as Metacosmesis.

content, the converging ends of a vast system of connecting social links whose other ends are enmeshed and involved within the content of other individual human life-structures. Every individual, of course, has private knowledge of the character of the central ordered psychological structure of that human unit which is himself. He has private knowledge of most of the relationships and psychological attitudes which fill in its content. But he cannot avoid being conscious of the fact that the whole pattern of his individual humanity is inextricably intertwined with—or conditioned by—his relationships with others. And he must acknowledge that the items which give content to this structure also have had their first origins in the surrounding world, having been appropriated into the individual's own structure by means of one or more special sense organs of the body.

Hence, if every individual unit of human nature focuses, and therefore partly includes within itself, at least something of the structural pattern of the social environment in which it lives and grows, certainly Our Lord's humanity came to include the structures of the lives of those with whom He surrounded Himself. He included these other patterns in a special, indeed a unique, sense. For in Him, through Him, and outward from Him, there worked the transcendent re-creative power of the Divine Logos Incarnate. And the group of people whom *He* began to form about Himself were brought by this creative power into a new social structure, not merely organizationally centered and focused upon Him, but organically rooted in Him, as every living organism is rooted in its parent stock and stem.

The members of the group which surrounded this new individual center of ordered human life were, through its superior divine power, made living, functional partakers of the new life-pattern which there emerged. The disciples and other friends, as Our Lord called them, were parts of an objective, functional, social extension of His own re-created humanity. They formed the first living social cell of that growing vine which should one day reconstruct and redeem God's fallen creation, in so far as the rest of the world should come to be taken into itself.

Since, therefore, those who surrounded Our Lord shared a new and common social humanity in continuity and union with His individual humanity, the newly perfected social structure of their common life was organically one with His. Hence, it was not the individual structure of Our Lord's perfected humanity alone which underwent in Him the process of Metacosmisis. The newly created structure of His surrounding group also participated in this process in and through Him. The fruit of this participation is evidenced by the share which the group of disciples had in Our Lord's unusual human powers. For they too, according to the Gospel records, could work certain miracles, especially those of healing. Our Lord gave them explicit power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases. And we are told that the disciples went through certain towns preaching the Gospel and healing everywhere.<sup>22</sup> We are told that the Apostle Peter actually walked for a moment on the surface of the water when Our Lord, also walking on the water, came to the disciples as they were storm-tossed in the midst of the Sea of Galilee.<sup>23</sup>

#### SOCIAL METACOSMESIS RENDERED INCOMPLETE BY HUMAN SIN

The disciples were not always completely successful in their attempted exercise of the full powers of a metacosmic humanity. We note that even St. Peter started to sink after his first few steps and had to be lifted and saved. In another instance, when Our Lord came down from the Mount of Transfiguration, He was asked to heal a demoniac lad over whom the disciples had worked in vain. When they asked Him: Why is this? Why could not we cast the devil out? He replied: This kind can come forth by nothing but prayer.<sup>24</sup>

From the fact of this only partial success on the part of the disciples, we may infer that the socially redeemed order now emerging and spreading into their lives was only derivative from that divine creative power which was as yet perfectly manifest solely in Our Lord's individual hu-

<sup>22</sup> Luke 9: 1, 6.

<sup>23</sup> Mark 6: 48-51.

<sup>24</sup> Mark 9: 17-29; Luke 9: 37-42.

manity. But this is the kind of thing which we might expect. The Order of the Incarnate Life does not act automatically upon other men. Neither does it completely overrule, and so take the place of, a continuing free allegiance on the part of those who earnestly wish to give its creative power free course among them. As we have said, its method is not a fascist one. Even the most earnest of men, even men of the utmost good will and intention, are not perfected over night within the Incarnation by an overruling force. It is only Our Lord who, in His individual unit of humanity, achieved that complete perfection of structure which permitted it to be received, as a whole and without any exclusion, into the level of His divine nature and then to be returned in Metacosmesis to the level of His earthly life. Therefore, it is only Our Lord as an individual who shows the complete powers of the fully realized potentialities of a metacosmic human nature. The disciples and others who surrounded Him contributed to His individual accomplishment a newly ordered structure which was able only partially to enter into the process of Metacosmesis. In other words, the social structure re-created within the group of disciples was not merely contingent. It was partly imperfect in both pattern and content. Now *imperfection* is a very different thing from *contingency*. Imperfection here is a genuine disorder imported (according to circumstances, with or without the conscious, free consent of the human will) into the ordered structure of the Incarnation itself. Our Lord never permitted this in His own case, and this is what makes His creative work unique in its own right, and hence a worthy offering (or return gift out of natural creation) to God the Father. This is what has enabled Our Lord to initiate the further social process of the Incarnation, spreading from His individually perfected humanity as its seminal source.

All others who have followed Him in this creative work have (so far) failed, to a greater or lesser extent. Hence, as in the case of the first disciples, the further human contributions to the content of Our Lord's Incarnation have been defective as well as contingent. The disciples them-

selves realized their own failures.<sup>25</sup> And Our Lord seems to have laid a particular emphasis upon a deficiency of faith among His immediate followers.<sup>26</sup> In the case of the failure with the demoniac boy, He implies a defect in their prayer life. But the point is that in so far as the human contribution to the spreading social humanity of Our Lord is allowed to remain defective, by just so much is it impossible to take it into the process of Metacosmesis. By just so much is the resulting imperfectly metacosmic humanity lacking in those extraordinary fruits which are found in Our Lord Himself.

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<sup>25</sup> Cf. St. Peter's exclamation: "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord;" Luke 5: 8.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Matt. 6:30; 17:20; 21:21; Mark 4:40; Luke 17:6.

## VI

### Metacosmesis After the Ascension

#### PROBLEM OF THE CONTINUATION OF OUR LORD'S SOCIAL HUMANITY AFTER HIS INDIVIDUAL ASCENSION

THE GROWING STRUCTURE of the social humanity of the Incarnate Logos which began to take organic form about Our Lord's individual humanity, partook of the process of Metacosmesis by virtue of its im-mediate union with Him as He continued to live visibly within this world. He was Himself that unique bridge across which the transit to the level of the divine and then back again to the human level could be effected. The social structure of His humanity which extended into the lives of His followers had access to that end of the bridge which, in and through Him, was based in the natural level where they all still lived and moved and acted together.

The time came, however, when His individual humanity was withdrawn from every direct, material contact with the structure of His social humanity. As an individual man, Our Lord had withdrawn completely into the level of His divinity. His humanity had completed its individual content within the level of this world; it had rounded out its appointed individual life pattern. This contingent human unit was now absolutely perfected in its totality. It returned no longer to fulfil a further individual growth in the environment of our natural creation. Yet our Lord's social humanity still continued to live and to grow, as it had lived and grown prior to His natural death. But now it had to live and grow among men and women who were surviving the ascension. The individual Man Jesus had, as He Himself clearly prophesied, gone away.<sup>27</sup> And Our Lord had in fact said that His individual departure was in

<sup>27</sup> John 16: 7.

some way expedient, or necessary. Otherwise, so He had also said, the Holy Spirit, whom He had promised to send down in some very special manner upon the surviving group of His followers, could not be so sent.<sup>28</sup>

After the ascension, the Christian group now left behind in this world seems to have felt some perplexity both concerning its own situation and concerning the true interpretation of Our Lord's words about the Gift of the Holy Spirit. But these men and women had Our Lord's promise that such a Gift would be made. They had His promise that in this Gift they would be guided into all truth.<sup>29</sup> They could therefore hope shortly for a much greater understanding. So much seemed clear enough. They all returned together from the Mount of Olives, where the event of the ascension had occurred, to the city of Jerusalem. There they continued to keep closely and expectantly together. This first group included, so we are told, the remaining eleven Apostles (the renegade Judas being dead), the Holy Women of Our Lord's fellowship, Our Lady Mary the Mother of Jesus, together with certain other members of Our Lord's human family or clan. The Apostles filled in their own number of twelve by adding Matthias, the first elected Bishop of the Church. And these all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication. Thus they waited for the fulfilment of Our Lord's final promise on the Mount of Olives when He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait there until they should receive power from on high, after that the Holy Ghost should come upon them.<sup>30</sup>

Two questions seem to require an answer in this situation.

First, how is it to be made possible for Our Lord's *social* humanity to continue as the expression of His life within the world after His *individual* humanity, which up to that time had been so obviously its substantial center, had withdrawn from its midst? How can the new social group be given the means of a continuing organic life now that its

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<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> John 16:13.

<sup>30</sup> Acts of the Apostles, Chapter I.

individually living center has been removed? Some sort of radical transition is necessary at this point. A living, redeeming process had begun as an individual unit of human perfection growing within this world. Then, by virtue of its divine vital power it had spread outward to inform a small environmental social order by knitting this into itself. This extending process must now effect a transition whereby the social group, previously a mere outgrowth from the individual at its center, assumes independently the vital, creative, living power of that individual, while the individual itself departs from its midst. This is a transition analogous to that which occurs when a first sprout from a seed, which at the beginning lives entirely as a kind of extension of the seed itself, drawing all its life and nourishment exclusively from it, begins to put out independent roots. The original seed now disappears. The new vine which was originally somehow pushed out by the seed, although obviously remaining in an historical sense dependent upon, and organically continuous with the seed, now begins to develop further that life which was always potential and implicit in the seed, but henceforth as a living being with an enlarging life of its own. Just how this complete transition from the individual to the social humanity of Our Lord's Incarnation was to be effected could not have been obvious to those who remained in the group after His ascension.

The second question to be answered concerns the nature of the continuing life-process of Our Lord's social humanity. Under what form shall the metabolism characteristic of the individual organism be imparted to the extending social organism? For granted that the social humanity can be given its own continuing life after the withdrawal of Our Lord's nuclear individual humanity; granted that the vital, re-creative work of the still surviving social organism can continue to enlarge Our Lord's own redeeming life-structure, how is it going to be possible for this enlarging, socially ordered structure, still in the natural level of our creation, to have access to that Metacosmesis which was open to it during Our Lord's individual life?

## WHAT HAPPENED AT PENTECOST

The answer to the first question was given at Pentecost. Pentecost both signified and effected that crucial transition whereby the re-creative process of the Incarnation passed from an individual, to a fully social implementation. The individual humanity of Our Lord here becomes His social humanity in the Church. The individual seed becomes the social vine. And this is brought about by a special intervention of the Holy Spirit at this critical moment in the advancing life of Our Lord's Incarnate humanity.

The event of Pentecost is therefore cognate to the event of the Annunciation, which was the initiation (conception) of the individual humanity of the Incarnate Lord.<sup>31</sup> Both events are crucial. In the one we find the first material elements of Our Lord's individual human body taken from the body of an individual woman, so that the first unit of a humanity re-created in the Incarnation may have its beginning. In the other, we find the first elementary nuclear cell of that same humanity established as a social entity, after Our Lord's individual humanity is withdrawn from its midst. It is here equipped with the potentiality of continuing the individual Incarnation on a social scale, so that the rest of a fallen world (provided it consents) may be eventually redeemed by being appropriated into the divinely bestowed re-created order of its Incarnational social life. In both cases we find God the Holy Spirit intervening to enable these two critical events to take place.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Note that Pentecost is not cognate to the Nativity of Our Lord, as is sometimes incorrectly suggested. At the historically critical (dialectically nodal) points of Pentecost and the Annunciation there was a special emergence of the enabling power of the Holy Spirit. No such intervention is recorded at the Nativity. The reason is that the Nativity is not a nodal event.

<sup>32</sup> Because of this peculiar intervention of the Holy Spirit in both the establishment and, as a consequence, in the further development of Our Lord's social humanity, the Church is properly called the Communion of the Holy Ghost (2 Cor. 13:14). It has been the custom of the Church to divide her Liturgical Year, her ordered sequences of Feasts and Fasts, into two major parts. In the first part, extending from Advent to the Ascension, she lays special emphasis

## EVIDENCE OF METACOSMESIS IN THE LIFE OF THE EARLY CHURCH

From the great event of Pentecost onward, we find a new sense of corporate, redeeming vocation emerging within the Church. That group of men and women who had formed a little company of people closely knit together *around* Him who was still physically present in their midst, now consciously assumed their further destined function of *being* His extending humanity when as a physical individual He had withdrawn. As by the Annunciations overshadowing of the Holy Spirit<sup>33</sup> Our Lord had been conceived the individual prototype of a re-created and perfected Man, so now by the Pentecostal outpouring<sup>34</sup> of the Holy Spirit they were conceived a corporate group continuous with His individual humanity, the social prototype of a re-created and perfected Mankind.

The special characteristics which we would expect to find in such a social nucleus soon became apparent. There

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upon the life and teaching of Jesus as the individual expression of the Incarnation. During the second part, she emphasizes His teaching as applied to, and implemented in, His social humanity, the Church. This season is therefore logically called the Pentecostal Season, and the Sundays within it are called Sundays after Pentecost.

During the later medieval period, the Anglican Communion changed the name of the Pentecostal Season to that of Trinity Season. Trinity Sunday is the Sunday immediately succeeding Pentecost. As a special Feast in itself it lays a desirable emphasis upon a profound theological truth. It celebrates the fullness of God's revelation of Himself to man as a Triune Unity, Three Persons and One God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. But when it is taken as the Feast whereby to designate the entire part of the Liturgical Year which follows it, the valuable emphasis upon the Church as the Community of the Holy Spirit is lost. It is not without significance that this change in name of the Liturgical season took place at a moment of the Church's history when an understanding of the Church as a redeeming social entity *within this world* was notoriously obscured and confused. It would be of great help in present-day re-emphasis upon the Church as the social humanity of Our Lord if the name of the Pentecostal Season could be restored in the Anglican Liturgical books.

<sup>33</sup> Luke 1:35.

<sup>34</sup> Acts of the Apostles, 2:2-4.

emerged at once within it an exalted sense of its new corporate vocation. These first members of the Church experienced the pressure of an almost explosive, vital expansive force which during the first few hours of their existence as a Community of the Holy Spirit seemed nearly unbearable. They were impelled to an excess of enthusiasm which caused certain bystanders even to mock, and to accuse them of being drunk with new wine. It was a new wine indeed which fired their imaginations and their wills, but it was in this case the very wine of Our Lord's own creative life coursing now through the veins of the newly conceived social extension of His Incarnation.

They began at once to spread this new life of Our Lord by the method of receiving whoever would respond into that group of which they were the first members. They had a marvellous sense of the potential universality of that social process now initiated among them. They spoke with tongues. That is, they began to speak a new and universal language, a language uniquely peculiar to them as a new nation and a new world. And in this language, fresh as their own new life, they issued a call to all other men and nations, whether Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian or Scythian, bond or free, that all might be made organically one in this Divine Community.<sup>35</sup> They received too the power of a tireless labor, surpassing ordinary human endurance, in the cause of spreading Our Lord's redeeming action throughout the whole known world. They could follow Our Lord's injunction literally to take no thought for themselves as individuals, no thought for what they should eat, or drink, or wear, no thought of private careers, of private well-being, comfort, or success in this world. And with all this there came fresh insights into the meanings and implications of Our Lord's life and work now continued in them. They uncovered among themselves new and astonishing gifts for intellectual formulations looking to the elucidation and preservation of the basic Christian verities. They found a deep and guiding

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<sup>35</sup> Acts of the Apostles, Chapter 2; 1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:11.

wisdom in the work of setting up the necessary organizational framework through which the redeeming action of their divine social organism should be practically implemented within the various communities of their environing world.

There began also to develop among them certain corporate attitudes, or communal habits, which are today given the name of the supernatural virtues, the virtues of Faith and Hope and Love (*Agape*). And Our Lord's promise of the power to work miracles was also fulfilled. They carried with them in their missionary work the gift not only of a new sanity of mind and spirit, but of the redemption of men's bodies from crippling disease to renewed and vigorous health.

These extraordinary qualities which we find emerging within the corporate life of the early Church seem a continuation of those similar qualities which were a striking feature of Our Lord's individual humanity. They are to be interpreted as the characteristics of a new community which, like Our Lord as an individual, lives its life within the very wall of partition between the natural and the supernatural levels, between time and eternity, between the contingent and the absolute stages of human salvation. We find here the characteristics of a reconstituted social humanity within this natural world, yet one which, again like the individual humanity of Our Lord during His earthly life, seems to have passed from the level of the human nature into the level of the divine, and then back again for continuing activity within the level of the natural world. In other words, we should judge from the evidence of the New Testament records that the process of Metacosmisis, which began in Our Lord as an individual, did in fact continue in the life of His social humanity after Pentecost.

#### THE MEANS OF THE CHURCH'S ACCESS TO THE METACOSMIC PROCESS

This brings us again to our second question. How is this continuation of Metacosmisis made possible for the social extension of the Incarnation? For it seems that the divine

and human natures are found conjoined uniquely in Our Lord as He lives Incarnate in His individual humanity. If he was the unique door or way<sup>36</sup> whereby alone the new creation of His Incarnation might pass to and fro between the level of the humanity and that of the divinity,<sup>37</sup> this was by virtue of the unique conjunction of the two natures in Him. In and through Him also, that further social Incarnational structure which had been creatively put out from the individual humanity, could have access to this bridge so long as Our Lord remained as a man upon this earth.

On the other hand, that social humanity of the Incarnation which was conceived at Pentecost extends the structure of the human nature of Our Lord. It still continues as a living organism in this world. It still carries on Our Lord's re-creative work within the natural level. It continues, in its growth, to fill up the patterned structure initiated in Our Lord's earthly life. But, with the individual humanity of Our Lord withdrawn, it is not obvious that this surviving social humanity necessarily possesses the same im-mediate access to the level of the divine nature which was available to the Man Jesus. This unmediated union is found only in the *individuated* Incarnation of the Divine Logos. The divine and human natures are not im-medately united in the Church.

We have already seen that an absolute consummation is just as much required in the case of every newly created achievement of Our Lord's social humanity as it was required in His individual case. Yet after the ascension the individual humanity was withdrawn from all direct material connection with other living men and women. As Our Lord Himself said, it had become necessary (expedient)

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<sup>36</sup> John 10:7,9; 14:6.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. John 14:6: No man cometh unto the Father but by me. And again, 10:1: He that entereth not by the door . . . but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. Note also the striking phrase of 10:9: I am the door; by me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go *in and out*, and find pasture. Going "in and out" implies Metacosmosis.

for Him to go away.<sup>38</sup> And he even fortified this statement by saying to the Apostle Peter: Whither I go thou canst not follow me now.<sup>39</sup> Therefore that end of the bridge which rested in Our Lord's individual humanity still on earth seems, after the ascension, to have been withdrawn from the world in which His surviving social humanity had still to continue its creative life and work.

#### OUR LORD'S HISTORICAL LIFE MADE ETERNALLY ACCESSIBLE

Our Lord fully foresaw the problem which this withdrawal of His individual humanity would create. He provided for it by instituting the Memorial of His Body and His Blood.

On the evening of the day before He died upon the Cross, He met with His disciples alone for an evening meal—the last they were to have together during His earthly life. At this supper He took bread, gave thanks over it, and blessed it—probably using for this a traditional Jewish form of blessing. He then distributed this blessed bread to the disciples with the truly amazing words: Take, eat, this is my Body. At the close of the meal He did likewise with a cup of wine, commanding them all to drink of it, saying: This is my Blood of the New Testament which is shed for you and for many for the remission of sins. And he concluded the whole solemn action with the injunction that as often as the disciples met together thereafter to perform that rite, as often as they did these things, they were to do them as a Memorial of Him:

It is difficult, if not impossible, to know just how the disciples themselves interpreted this rite on that first evening of its institution. For one thing, in spite of Our Lord's teaching, in spite of explicit prophecies, they seemed not yet to have realized that on that very evening Our Lord was to be betrayed and arrested, that a nocturnal trial would be contrived with such indecent haste that by noon the next day He would be nailed to a Cross, and that by

<sup>38</sup> John 16:7.

<sup>39</sup> John 13:36.

three in the afternoon He would be dead. They did not realize the frightful tragedy which now impended.

Furthermore, they could have as yet no complete knowledge even of the full content of that life for which this Memorial was to stand. For the final events of Our Lord's life, the crucifixion and death, the resurrection and the ascension, were still to be added to its content. And it turned out that these were the crucial events which made a full understanding of the Memorial possible. Therefore, the disciples' immediate understanding of the fullness of that which was now committed into their hands must have been somewhat vague. Inevitably it must have been deficient.

However, after the resurrection and ascension, the full import of the great rite became clarified. Whatever may have been the fear and despair of the disciples at the dread moment of Our Lord's death on the Cross, they now knew that He had triumphed over death and that He lived eternally. He had withdrawn the visible body of His individual humanity from their midst, but they knew from His own post-resurrection teaching, validated by the evidence of their own senses, that He had taken this humanity with Him into the heart of His own eternal Godhead.

#### HISTORICAL AND ETERNAL ASPECTS OF OUR LORD'S LIFE AND WORK

From this time forth the human life of Our Lord must be viewed under two aspects. On the one hand, His individual accomplishment is an historical fact. In this sense, it is the life of a single Man, lived once and for all upon this earth. This life is now ended by His death. It therefore recedes into the historical past.

But this historical accomplishment, this life-structure, having now been conveyed in its entirety into the level of the divine nature of Our Lord, has also in its entirety been made eternal. It follows, therefore, that none of the events within Our Lord's individual human life can be adequately thought of as merely past in an historical sense. His life in all its fullness still *is*. From the moment of the as-

cension, the whole of Our Lord's life must be viewed not merely as a temporal, but as an eternal fact. It is not merely a life completed on the Cross, within the past history of our world. It is a life caught up by Him as He is risen and ascended, into the time-transcending level of His Godhead. Therefore, in one sense we may say that the Man Jesus lived for such and such a time, so and so many years ago. But in another sense we find that this life, conveyed into the level of Our Lord's divine nature, still *is*; just as the Divine Logos, who clothes this historical human life upon Himself, still *is* to all eternity. In particular, the culminating events of the Cross, the resurrection, and the ascension, the events by which the totality of Our Lord's re-creative human accomplishment was finally conveyed from the level of a contingent to that of an absolute perfection, are not merely temporally completed events of a long past history. They are also eternal events.

Now such events are difficult, if not impossible, exactly to set forth in human terms, conditioned as these terms must be by the necessary time concepts which frame our earthly lives. We may say, however, without too great inexactitude, that they would appear to us who still remain within the time-process as events in some sense still going on. It would seem also that, under proper conditions, they could therefore be made present or accessible even to men and women who might live at a time long after their actual historical date.

#### THE ETERNAL LORD INCARNATE PRESENT IN HIS MEMORIAL

It is precisely this present accessibility of the eternal, and from an earthly point of view ever-continuing, events of the crucifixion, the resurrection, and the ascension, which the Apostolic group discerned when immediately after Pentecost its members continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in Breaking of Bread, and in prayers.<sup>40</sup> For this same reason, the Breaking of Bread, accompanied by prayer, continues invariably to be the characteristic and necessary expression of fellowship and wor-

<sup>40</sup> Acts of the Apostles, 2:42.

ship within every subsequent group of Our Lord's social humanity.

Following Our Lord's command to make the Memorial,<sup>41</sup> the members of His extending social humanity convene, bringing with them for this action simple articles of food and drink, bread and wine. Our Lord's individual material human body has since the ascension been withdrawn from their midst. But when the post-pentecostal members of His social humanity, knit organically together as they now are in the Community of the Holy Spirit, bless their portions of bread and wine, repeating Our Lord's own first action at the Last Supper—repeating too His recorded words—then the bread and wine become His very Body and Blood.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>41</sup> Luke 22:19. The Command was: Do this as my Memorial: *τοῦτο ποιεῖτε εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν*. *ποεῖν* means "to do." In equally common usage it means "to make, to produce, to create."

<sup>42</sup> This creative act, whereby the substances of the bread and wine are changed into the Substances of Our Lord's Body and Blood, is usually called Transubstantiation. It is difficult to see how a more accurate, philosophically technical term could be found. Unfortunately, the word Transubstantiation is often said to be an attempt to explain the mode of Our Lord's action in accomplishing this change. This is erroneous. The word simply states the truth that a substantial change does take place at the Church's consecration of her bread and wine.

It expresses the fact that before this consecration it would be correct to point to the offered bread and wine and to affirm of them respectively: "This *is* bread," and "This *is* wine." After the consecration, these two statements are no longer true. It would be quite incorrect to point to the consecrated Blessed Sacrament and to say without qualification: "This *is* bread; This *is* wine." The proper statement would now be: "This *is* Our Lord's Body; This *is* Our Lord's Blood." And that is all that the term Transubstantiation is intended to convey. The Church uses the same technical terminology in the Nicene Creed when she wishes to say clearly and concisely that Our Lord Incarnate *is* Very God. She affirms this by saying that Our Lord is of one Substance with the Father.

A vulgar misunderstanding of the term Transubstantiation unfortunately causes even many Anglicans to shy away from its use. Since the Anglican Church employs the same philosophical terminology in her Creed, it is not very logical for her members to refuse to employ it when a method of accurate formulation of her central Sacramental doctrine is sought.

This is Our Lord's great and central gift to His continuing Church. Within this gift, by the operation of the Sacramental action itself, it is of historical record that Our Lord promised the emergence of the Substances of His Body and His Blood. And this promise, the Church has found, was quite literally intended.

However, since the events of the resurrection and ascension, Our Lord's own individual human soul and body, after a three days' separation following His death on the Cross, are eternally reunited as an organic whole within the level of His divine nature. The totality of His humanity, body and soul, is now united to Him in the level of the Person of His Godhead. It follows that wherever the Substances of His Body and His Blood emerge, there He too is totally present as a living whole, both in His Incarnate humanity and as God. He is of necessity totally present, by concomitance with His Body, just as every living man is totally present, human body and human soul, whenever his body is found present at some particular place.<sup>43</sup>

Thus Our Lord in His totality emerges in the midst of whatever group of His social humanity may make this great Memorial of Him according to His command. He emerges from the level of His divinity under the forms of the consecrated Bread and Wine into the natural level of His continuing humanity. He emerges in such wise that He may receive into Himself whatever further additions to the content of the structure of His human perfection may now be brought forward at the hands of those who continue on earth to fill up this content. He can now receive these further contributions just as before His natural death upon the Cross, He received into Himself directly the re-creative accomplishments of the disciples and of the others who at that time formed the initial social extension of His individual organism.

#### THE NATURAL BREAD AND WINE OF OUR LORD'S SOCIAL HUMANITY

Prior to their presentation at Our Lord's Memorial the

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<sup>43</sup> See Appendix II, page 199.

natural bread and wine have another reference. For the bread comes out of a long process of preparation, a process which involves seed time and harvest in grain fields. In these days it involves threshing machines and rolling mills. It involves logging operations to provide lumber for barrels and paper bags. It involves grain elevators and systems of storage warehouses. It involves financial operations, as, for example, financing of harvests through banks. It involves wholesale dealers in wheat and other ingredients. It even involves brokers and their speculative operations in wheat pits. It involves scientists, chemists and engineers. It involves bakeries and the operations of middlemen and retail shops. Collaterally, a simple piece of bread also involves iron ore mines, collieries, blast furnaces and steel rolling mills, from which sources come the modern machines used in every stage of the bread's preparatory history. It even includes political maneuvers and international relations, since questions of tariffs and regulations of international trade determine, in our present economic system, the regional origin of wheat for the bread which is available to any particular group of people. And it needs no specialized knowledge, no great exercise of the imagination, to see that analogous considerations apply to the preparation of any given portion of wine.

In other words, the preparation of the requisite materials for the Christian Memorial of Our Lord involves a vast network of organized human relationships, embracing without doubt on any particular occasion, the hopes and fears, the successes and failures, the work and recreation, the joys and sorrows, in short, the socially integrated, organized lives of hundreds of thousands of human beings. All these have contributed, in greater or less measure, to the emergence within our natural order of the manufactured articles of food which every Christian group must use in obeying Our Lord's command.

#### NATURAL BREAD AND WINE AS STRUCTURES OF CREATIVE SOCIAL GROWTH

Natural bread and wine, therefore, emerge as the end-products of a certain structure or block of socially organ-

ized human activity throughout a time recently passed. They stand as concrete, material manifestations of all the human relationships and modes of behavior and activity which have been historically involved in their preparation. They are objects into whose constitution there enter vast and complicated human operations and creative activities which have contributed both to their actual existences and to their presence at a particular required time and place. All of which means that the members of any group of the social body of Our Lord always bring with them, concreted—as it were materially precipitated—under the forms of portions of bread and wine, a structure of dynamic human relationships and of experiences, a structure not alone filled in by their own recent lives and deeds, but entraining within itself all other human activities which have been involved in its history. For, as Aristotle has put it, the faculty of making something resides in the thing made. “The act of building resides in the thing built; i.e. it comes to be and exists simultaneously with the house. Thus . . . the actuality resides in the thing produced; the act of building in the thing built, the act of weaving in the cloth, etc.”<sup>44</sup> Karl Marx seems to have intended to say something like this when he wrote: “As values, all commodities (i.e. any artifacts or humanly manufactured articles intended for the channels of trade. F. H. S.) are only definite masses of congealed labor-time.”<sup>45</sup> And thus, the emergent values of the multitudinous human relationships and social acts of labor which have produced them, *reside in portions of natural bread and wine.*<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> *Metaphysics*, IX, viii, 13. Cf. Loeb Library Translation by Hugh Tredennick, M. A.

<sup>45</sup> *Capital*, tr., (Chicago, 1906), I, Chap. 1, p. 46.

<sup>46</sup> St. Augustine used to teach this truth to his people. For example, in his sermons we find such statements as: “After the Sanctification of the Sacrifice of God, because He has willed that we also should be His sacrifice—which was signified when it was first placed upon the altar (i.e. at the Offertory), that is, that we also are His sacrifice and it (the oblation of bread and wine) is only a symbol of what we really are—we say the Lord’s prayer . . . .” “There you are upon the table, there you are in the chalice.” (Sermons 227, 229).

## OUR LORD'S MEMORIAL AS A TWOFOLD MOVEMENT

The Memorial of Our Lord's Body and Blood is, therefore, the meeting point of a twofold movement.

On the one hand, a group of the Community of the social humanity of the Incarnation, continuing Our Lord's creative work here on earth, convenes to present to Him the fruits of its activity within a certain period of its life just past. It puts forward a certain increment in the content of its living structure corresponding to its own organic growth during that period of time. This newly won content has been appropriated from among the elements of human life available to the re-creative contact of the Divine Community within the fallen world of its contemporary environment. Appropriated thus into the content of the living vine of Our Lord's social humanity, a certain added area or block of human life has been taken from the disorder of its fallen condition into the order of the New World of the Incarnation. Following Our Lord's command, this fresh addition to the content of His continuing Incarnation on this earth is put forward within His appointed Memorial under the forms of portions of natural bread and wine.

Our Lord then, on His part, moves to emerge from the level of His now risen and ascended *individual* humanity, that He may receive into that level the gifts of this content newly added to His *social* humanity. He emerges in the midst of that social humanity which still lives and grows, and thus extends the process of the redemption of the world upon the level of His human nature here on earth. *And He emerges in the Substances of His Body and His Blood under the forms of those same portions of offered bread and wine which embody a newly ordered increment in the redeemed content of His earthly Community.* The earthly body moves to meet the ascended Body and, within the Consecration of Our Lord's Memorial, these two levels of His humanity merge organically in one perfected whole.

### CONTINGENCIES FOUND IN THE OFFERED NATURAL BREAD AND WINE

The natural bread and wine put forward by the Divine

Community are portions of a fallen creation newly ordered into a contingent perfection. Through the re-creative power of the life of Our Lord, working and extending itself within His social humanity, they are structures ordered into the perfection of the pattern of His life. But they, like His individual historical humanity, necessarily contain elements of pain and sorrow, of frustration, both individual and social, of individual and corporate discomfort, and very likely of seeming defeat. Also, the ordered content of these gifts is always dreadfully inadequate and incomplete. It is incomplete in the sense that it remains linked to a further, spreading network of human relationships which, as these fan outward in the fallen, environmental world whence the bread and wine are drawn, still persist in their disordered and fallen state. For, as already indicated, it is not merely Our Lord's social humanity alone which has taken part in the preparation of the bread and wine about to be put forward for the now developing Memorial. These natural objects do not by any means issue exclusively from work, activities, and systems of human relationships which are held totally within the bounds of the organism of the Incarnation. Great numbers of men and women who are but nominally Christian, or who, indeed, make no pretense of holding the Catholic Faith or of working for the spread of the Incarnation, have contributed to their making. Certainly too, quite regardless of the beliefs and intentions of any of the individual people here involved, many of the industries and avenues of the trade and transportation through which the bread and wine have emerged into their present positions are now organized on a basis exhibiting little or nothing of Christian justice. And the present capitalist economic arrangements of our environing fallen world stand in radical and irresolvable opposition to the social realization of anything approaching a universal brotherhood based on Christian love among men.

Within the exclusive practical control of the present members of any average group of Our Lord's social humanity, there lie as a rule relatively few of the industrial and commercial processes required for the preparation of their por-

tions of bread and wine. It follows that the offered bread and wine, in the necessity of present circumstances, include within their structures linkages with social relationships as yet untouched by the re-creative spread of Our Lord's New Social World. Unredeemed human beings, caught in the disordered social relationships of a fallen world, of a world organized for the most part on a basis of individualistic and competitive self-aggrandizement, must nevertheless be enlisted to a considerable extent by the Divine Community for help in the preparation of its bread and wine. They must be thus enlisted against some future time when they too can be further reached and re-ordered into a new pattern fit to enter into the pattern of Our Lord's social humanity. And until that time arrives, the necessary linkages here entailed of the offered bread and wine with a persisting, unredeemed environment also introduce contingencies into their perfection—just as analogous contingencies were discoverable too in Our Lord's individual case.

#### THE ABSOLUTE PERFECTION OF THE BREAD AND WINE IN THEIR CONSECRATION

It is clear, therefore, that the bread and wine at any given celebration of Our Lord's Memorial present structures which have been brought only into the first stage of the process of the redemption of human life. They have been brought only into the contingent perfection of Our Lord's Incarnation. Our Lord, however, emerging within these gifts—Incarnate, as it were “further” within this added content of His earthly humanity—now turns to His eternal Cross. He turns to move this content, now freshly added to His living social experience, into the central transit of His Sacrifice. Upon His Cross, here and now unveiled again in time—as it must be by concomitance with His humanity when and wherever He Himself is present—He lifts up these contingent increments in His spreading social humanity, just as He lifted up His individual human body nearly two thousand years ago. Within the Memorial of Our Lord's Body and Blood, the Offering of the natural bread

and wine is followed by their Consecration. And once again, just as on the historical Cross He conveyed the content of His individual humanity from the contingent level of His human nature to the absolute level of His divine nature, so now He conveys the contingent gifts of His social humanity into the same absolute level. He thus perfects them absolutely. For as Our Lord emerges in the midst of a group of His social humanity, the substances of the offered natural bread and wine, according to the promise and covenant of the Last Supper, terminate at their Consecration in the Substances of His risen and ascended Body and Blood. By a necessary concomitance with, and participation in, this great transit, the content of the ordered structure of that recent growth within the Divine Community which is set forth within the natural bread and wine, is conveyed from the contingent level of its origin into the absolute level of Our Lord's risen and ascended humanity. It becomes comprehended within the process of the Sacrifice of the Cross. In this way, to the ever-enlarging content of His social Incarnation, Our Lord reopens sacramentally that bridge, that way between the contingent and the absolute, available im-medately in His individual Incarnation because of the conjunction of the two natures in Him.

#### THE MEMORIAL AS A SACRIFICE

The Memorial of Our Lord's Body and Blood is therefore revealed as a true Sacrifice, because it is the emergence into our time and space of His eternal Sacrifice. It is a Sacramental Sacrifice, because it is an emergence of the Sacrifice of the Cross under new material forms. The place of the Sacramental Sacrifice is a true Altar, because it is itself the re-emergence of the Altar of the Cross. Thus within this Memorial, this Holy Sacrifice of the Church's Altar, successive portions of a fallen and disordered world, reordered into the contingent first stage of its redemption, are offered periodically to Our Lord under the forms of natural bread and wine. He moves to receive every such offering by emerging within the offered Elements. He clothes this added content of His Incarnate humanity upon

Himself, conveying it through the transit of the Cross into the level of His Godhead where His risen humanity now abides. A newly redeemed portion of God's fallen world is thus received from out the first stage into the required second stage of the redemption of human life.

#### COMPLETION OF THE CYCLE OF METACOSMESIS IN THE HOLY COMMUNION

The Divine Community of Our Lord's social humanity, however, is still to continue its own growth, its own redeeming action within the level of this world. Certain portions of its bread and wine, newly prepared, have now entered into the transit from the contingent to the absolute perfection of Our Lord's Incarnation. Nevertheless, if Our Lord's social humanity is to continue its life in this world within the continuing time process of a future history of its own, it must build upon the foundations of its past growth. In other words, while the structure of its own most recent history has, under the forms of bread and wine, been conveyed by Our Lord out of the natural level of the earthly life of the Divine Community and into the super-natural level of His ascended life, yet it is precisely upon these same historical structures within the natural world, within the time process, that the growth structures of its future here on earth must be founded. For at the time of any particular offering of the Memorial of Our Lord's Body and Blood, although the re-created structures of the bread and wine enter into the transit of the Cross here opened to them, nevertheless, the Divine Community has not itself come to the end of its natural life.<sup>47</sup> It is, instead, in the position of Our Lord's individual humanity during the days of its growth and development before the Cross.

We have seen that whatever content accrued within the level of His human nature during Our Lord's lifetime could, in Him, be im-mediately received into the absolute level of His divinity and thus be perfected absolutely. Into this

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<sup>47</sup> The End of the World, for Our Lord's social humanity, will correspond to the place which the Cross, the resurrection and the ascension have in His individual earthly life.

same transit the gifts of natural bread and wine put forward by His social humanity have now been admitted by their Consecration within His Memorial. They have been admitted thus, not im-medately but meditately through Him, by a concomitant participation in His Cross which is opened by the emergence of His Body and Blood under the forms of those same portions of bread and wine.

We have also seen that in Our Lord's individual case and during His earthly lifetime, whatever new structures of redeemed order were received out of a contingent into an absolute perfection, were—again because of the union of the two natures in Him—returned equally im-medately to the level of His human nature continuing within this world. These, so returned, could then serve as the basis for His continuing future individual earthly life. We have called this transit, "back and forth" from the natural to the super-natural levels and then again to the natural level of being, a process of Metacosmisis. This return of the absolutely perfected offerings of consecrated Bread and Wine must also be effected in parallel manner as a basis for the continuing earthly life of Our Lord's social humanity. And for this also Our Lord has provided.

Having now received certain contingently perfected increments to the content of His continuing Incarnation, He turns again to return these very same Gifts, but now consecrated, to the original givers. However, the substances of the natural bread and wine, through their consecration within the Memorial of His institution, have now been received into the Substances of His own absolutely perfected Body and Blood. It is, then, His own very Body and Blood which are rebestowed upon the members of the group of His social humanity as they now come forward to receive these Gifts. In the great Rebestowal of the Holy Communion, by concomitance with the Substances of His Body and Blood, Our Lord again gives Himself entire and undivided into the hands of His continuing social body within this world. He gives Himself now, however, under the forms of that consecrated Bread and Wine which had their natural origins within, and through, the very group

to which they now return. And since He has by this time clothed Himself with that added content of His Incarnation which their ordered structures have provided, therefore in thus giving Himself again to His community, He returns,—again by concomitance with the Gift of Himself,—these same structures, now perfected absolutely, into the hands of His social humanity. He returns these absolutely perfected structures so that upon this fresh basis, now made adequate to a perfected future activity, His social humanity may continue its growth. He returns the offered structures embodied in the natural bread and wine, absolutely perfected and clothed upon Himself, to the end that His social humanity, receiving them united to Him in His Body and His Blood, may fare forth again into the fallen world to prepare, upon this absolutely perfected foundation, new offerings, under forms of fresh portions of natural bread and wine, for the Offertory of its next succeeding Memorial. And with this return of the Gifts, perfected absolutely by union with Our Lord's individual humanity as it now resides in the level of the divine nature, back again into the social humanity which continues its growth upon the level of this world, the Process of Metacosmesis on behalf of His social humanity is made complete.

## VII

# The Liturgy of the Memorial of Our Lord's Body and Blood

### ITS THREEFOLD STRUCTURE

THE VERBAL FORMS, together with the ritual gestures, ceremonies, and acts appropriate to their accompaniment, by which the Catholic Church has customarily performed her bounden duty and service<sup>48</sup> of the Memorial of Our Lord's Body and Blood, have varied considerably throughout the centuries of her history. They have also varied—and still do vary—in different sections of the Church throughout the world. All Catholic Liturgies, wherever found, contain irreducibly in their central structures three indispensable parts. These are distinguished as, first, the Offertory; second, the Giving of Thanks (called *Eucharist* in Greek), in conjunction with the Consecration of the Bread and Wine; and third, the Distribution of the Body and Blood, called the Holy Communion.

### THE OFFERTORY

The Offertory consists in putting forward of their contributed portions of bread and wine by the members of the assembled congregation. This is done solemnly, with appropriate prayers, and with expressions of the corporate intention to offer to God (within and through the Incarnation of Our Lord) the new increments of growth in the content of the redeeming organism of Our Lord's social humanity which are embodied in them.

At this point it should be freshly emphasized that the bread and wine, when set forth by the Divine Community

<sup>48</sup> These words are found in the Canons both of the Latin Mass and of the Liturgies of every member of the family of Anglican Prayer Books.

at its Offertory, are no longer what can be called ordinary bread and wine. It is true that every object made or manufactured by men sums up within itself the structure of the history of its preparation. Even in a fallen world a manufactured article always emerges as it were at the apex of a pyramid of complicated and varied human activities which have entered into its preparation; and which now converge within it as it issues forth, an objective, material embodiment of a causal structure reaching back in time and extending in space. But the bread and wine of the Catholic Offertory issue from a structure of human actions and relationships which are themselves already ordered within the social humanity of Our Lord. It is true, as we have now seen, that the Divine Community in its preparation of this bread and wine has usually had to draw—sometimes largely—upon the help and cooperation of men and women not as yet within its own newly ordered social life. It has had to make use of human relationships and organized activities which are still unredeemed—sometimes deplorably unchristian in their constitution—within an as yet untouched environmental, fallen world. But the bread and wine of the Offertory are none the less put forward within, through and by the Community of Our Lord's humanity. They have, therefore, been already received into the first stage of the process of the Incarnational redemption of the world. They are fresh structures of content in Our Lord's humanity; they further fill it up.

In this they are entirely analogous to additions to Our Lord's individual humanity as this grew and increased in content within its own particular environment. For every new item of empirical knowledge appropriated into His human mind came originally from a disordered and perverted environmental world. Every new human relationship into which He entered had to be with another individual still largely enmeshed in the arrangements of that same world. It had to be with an individual who in himself remained more or less sinful and a prey to the frailties stemming from both original and actual sin. Yet, within the pattern of Our Lord's humanity, such additions to its

content were redeemed "at His end" of every external relationship—if we may put it thus—into a perfected order which corresponded to God's will, under the circumstances of a still environing fallen world. They were thus taken, it is true, into a pattern only of contingent perfection, and the necessarily remaining linkages with the still unredeemed world were not the least factors in this very contingency. Nevertheless they formed, or marked out, a newly ordered pattern capable of receiving that absolute perfection which was later to be bestowed upon it. The bread and wine of the Divine Community—the Community which by virtue of the indwelling of the Holy Ghost functions as a social organism extending the individual organism of Our Lord—this bread and wine also embody elements of human life redeemed at their central convergence into the contingently perfected structure of the social humanity of God Incarnate.

The Offertory, then, is a highly important and solemn moment in the performance of Our Lord's Memorial; for it is the putting forward of a newly ordered content of the Incarnation which originates in the growth of Our Lord's social humanity. This is put forward that it may be received by Him who is about to emerge from the level of His divine nature to clothe this additional, contingently perfected portion of a redeemed world upon His risen and ascended Self.

#### MISCONCEPTIONS CONCERNING THE OFFERTORY

The Western Church, unfortunately, has tended to minimize the ceremonies of the Offertory in her Liturgical practice. And this is a matter which calls for careful remedy; for without an understanding of the place of the Offertory in Our Lord's Memorial, the understanding of the great action as a whole remains seriously deficient.

In this latter regard the Anglican Communion has been a chief offender. Historically this is probably accounted for by the damaging influence which Luther's thinking had on the mind of Archbishop Cranmer. To Luther, any emphasis upon the Offertory seemed to imply that the redeeming

action of God depended upon a prior preparation for such action which had to be carried out by man. This seemed to him to make man's salvation partly the work of unaided, sinful humanity.

Now this is unthinkable. It would be a form of the Pelagian heresy.<sup>49</sup> Therefore, it is as clear to Catholics as it is to Lutherans that man's salvation, his fallen condition being what it is, must in the final analysis be exclusively the work of God. Our Lord said to His followers: Without me ye can do nothing<sup>50</sup>—and He certainly meant this quite literally. However, in the Incarnation, God wills to carry out the work of man's salvation by utilizing certain contributions to His action which are solicited by Him from man.

Thus, in His individual Incarnation, He solicited the first elements of His own human body from a woman, His Mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary. In precisely a parallel manner He solicits gifts of bread and wine from men on earth as He clothes Himself further with a social body so that His Incarnation may continue to take into itself ever-widening reaches of human life, and thus redeem the world. But, even so, these human offerings which are solicited to further His redeeming work are by no means the result of unaided human effort. If they were, this would indeed make God's action dependent upon man's contributory co-operation. Man would then be genuinely contributing to his own salvation *by virtue of His human works*—the doctrine which Luther thought was embodied in the Catholic Offertory and which he, with Cranmer, so emphatically rejected. Therefore, it must always be made clear that man can give to God something which can be utilized by Him in the work of redemption, only by virtue of a prior action by God which enables man to make a gift adequate to the purpose for which it is solicited.

<sup>49</sup> Pelagius, an Englishman who lived in Rome at the time of St. Augustine, taught that natural man, granted sufficient knowledge and proper leadership, could perfect himself. The logical conclusion from this would be that the Incarnation and Our Lord's Redemption of Man are superfluous.

<sup>50</sup> John 15:5.

## THE OFFERTORY AND THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF OUR LORD'S MOTHER

Our Lady, as a human being in a fallen world, could not have offered a primal human seed fit for the initiation of Our Lord's individual Incarnation, unless God had enabled her to do this. He enabled her to do this by redeeming her retroactively within His Son's Incarnation, before its actual initiation in time. By a special act, which was entirely His, God enabled Our Lady to put forward to the use of the Divine Logos the seed of an individual human being which had already been taken from the disorders of a fallen world's environment into the contingent perfection of the first stage of the process of man's redemption. Our Lady, at the time of the Annunciation, was already disengaged from the disorders of a fallen world and was within the perfected pattern of that humanity of Our Lord which was later to take its own individual beginning from her. As this is usually put, she was immaculately conceived. This means that the redeeming operation of the Incarnation which was presently to utilize her individual offering as the basis of its initiation, was retroactively applied to her at the time of her own Conception. As an individual, she was then brought into that redeemed and ordered status which other members of Our Lord's social humanity were to receive at Pentecost. And this had to be accomplished even in advance of the emergence of that individual unit of Incarnate humanity out of which the social humanity of Our Lord later grew.

Ever since Pentecost, entrance into the redeemed order of Our Lord's Incarnation is normally accomplished through the Sacrament of Baptism. It is thus that men and women are moved from the environment of a fallen world, from the entanglements of Original Sin, into that new social world which can provide the environing pattern of Our Lord's human perfection. It may therefore be said that Our Lady, by a special—indeed, by a unique—Act of God, was given the status which Baptism provides, even before the establishment of the Sacrament itself. She received, as an individual, the status of membership in the social hu-

manity of Our Lord, even before the emergence of His individual humanity.

It is interesting to note that Our Lord's Mother was also present with that group of His followers who received the Gift of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost. She thus eventually took her corporate place among all the other members of her Son's social humanity. But before that time came, she had herself become an individual Antetype of the social extension of the Incarnation.

By virtue, then, of her Immaculate Conception, of her baptized status pre-bestowed, she was enabled to put forward that Gift to God which He solicited in order that the individual Incarnation of His Son might have its beginning. She was enabled, by virtue of her advance redemption in her own Son's subsequent action, to make the First Offertory ever to come from a human source, but which at the same time was prepared in such contingent, but perfected, pattern that it could be clothed upon the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity. And any view which denies to her this specifically prepared status seems to involve the heresy of Pelagius.<sup>51</sup>

#### THE OFFERTORY AND THE BAPTIZED COMMUNITY

So too, the gifts of bread and wine brought forward at the Offertory of Our Lord's Memorial emerge from a Divine Community which, by the power of the Holy Ghost, is enabled to continue to build a perfected social structure having the pattern of Our Lord's spreading social Incarnation. This Divine Community, like Our Lady as an individ-

<sup>51</sup> It is sometimes mistakenly suggested that the Immaculate Conception of St. Mary logically requires the Immaculate Conception of her own parents as well, and then of her grandparents, and so on indefinitely. But when the Immaculate Conception is interpreted in terms of the bestowed status of Baptism, it can be seen at once that this no more requires an immaculately conceived ancestry than the reception of Baptism by any other individual on his entry into the Church requires a baptized ancestry. The status of Baptism is given individually to every Christian without regard to the status of his progenitors.

It is worth while pointing out that the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception does not in itself assert that Our Lady was subsequently

ual, has been received out of the disordered social arrangements of the fallen world. Hence the gifts of bread and wine which it puts forward embody structures of growth and accomplishment which are the fruits of a living social organism disentangled from Original Sin. Like that first seed of the individual Incarnation, they are available to be clothed upon the Son of God. They are gifts which issue from a baptized community, the Community of the Holy Ghost. This community has corporately the same status relative to the world's Original Sin which was given to Our Lady in her Immaculate Conception. Growth in the ordered content of such a community is not achieved by the power of fallen man. It is a growth on the part of Our Lord's Incarnational life-process. Therefore, the bread and wine of its Offertory are already redeemed from the vitiating hindrances of the fallen-ness of the unredeemed world environment.

In both cases, this perfecting of the gifts of human origin is not completed by men. The adequate perfecting of Our Lady and the adequate perfecting of the Divine Community is in each case a perfection which basically emerges solely from the redeeming life-process of the Incarnation, working in the first instance within the individual called Mary of Nazareth, and in the second instance within the organism of Our Lord's social humanity. This life-process utilizes the elements of human life, *but it does not depend for the order of its perfected pattern upon the contributing power of human beings*. The one thing which might be considered a human contribution, either at the

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always free from voluntary or actual sin. This latter fact may well be believed, but it raises another question and one which does not enter the present discussion. All baptized Christians are relieved of the burden of Original Sin just as was St. Mary. However, experience teaches us that baptized men and women do subsequently fall into actual sin. This may or may not have been true of St. Mary, but the question is not under discussion here.

The doctrine of the Immaculate Conception is the Catholic answer to the objections of Karl Barth, Reinhold Niebuhr and others of the Neo-orthodox school of Protestant thought, that the traditional doctrine of the Offertory involves the Pelagian heresy.

time of the Annunciation or at the time of the preparation of the Offertory of the Divine Community, is the complete consent of the free human will that God's will may prevail utterly, that God may use Our Lady in the one case, and the Divine Community in the other, as the source within and through which *He* may prepare the human basis for His own further redeeming action.<sup>52</sup>

Those who, like Luther and after him Cranmer, fear the implication of the Catholic Offertory have a deficient view of the nature of the Church. This deficiency is of course the fundamental Protestant heresy. Protestant thought denies that the Church is a genuinely organic social continuation of Our Lord's individual humanity. Therefore, Protestants do not realize that bread and wine prepared in this newly ordered social body partake of His perfection. They have this perfection because they here emerge from the Incarnate life-process of the Divine Logos who, by the enabling power of the Holy Ghost, still lives and grows within His Community. The offered bread and wine are thus themselves in reality *prepared by God Incarnate*. Human members of the Community are utilized in their social unity in this preparation—provided they fully and continuingly consent—but they do not, in any human right of their own, constitute themselves as a group capable of accomplishing it. They do not accomplish that necessary preliminary social perfection required for the preparation of the bread

<sup>52</sup> The rational freedom of humanity is not here infringed or denied. For true and full freedom, in the Christian view, is the ability to understand the will of God coupled with an adequate power (grace) perfectly to conform to it. As the Prayer Book has it, the service of God is perfect freedom. If the prevailing of the will of God is interpreted as a necessity within His creation—the only ultimate alternative being the destruction of whatever created beings fail to conform to that will—then the Christian definition has much in common with the Marxian concept of freedom. The bases of necessity within the natural world are not the same for both Christian and Marxian, but their definitions of human freedom, once certain necessities are recognized, are practically identical. For Karl Marx's colleague Friedrich Engels following his earlier mentor Hegel, says that "freedom is the appreciation of necessity." (*Anti-Dühring*: The section on *Morality and Law; Freedom and Necessity*).

and wine for the Offertory, any more than Our Lady herself accomplished her own individual freedom from Original Sin, her own individual contingent perfection in the Incarnation, her own individual Immaculate Conception.<sup>53</sup>

#### THE OFFERTORY AND SYMBOLIC LITURGICAL EMPHASIS

The Eastern Church has maintained a Liturgical tradition with regard to the Offertory much more explicit than that of the West.<sup>54</sup> In the Eastern usage, the portions of bread and wine later to be consecrated are prepared solemnly upon a table specifically provided for that purpose. This table might appropriately be placed near the door of the church where the members of the Divine Community first enter to bring in their Offerings. In every case the table of the Prothesis, as it is called, is quite separate from the Holy Table of the Altar where the Consecration of the Bread and Wine is later to take place.<sup>55</sup> The people's Offerings are here made ready. Prayers are solemnly intoned with an accompanying showing of lights and incense. Subsequently the prepared bread and wine are carried in solemn procession to the Holy Table. As a matter of fact this procession of the offered, but still unconsecrated portions of natural bread and wine, this Greater Entrance as it is called, is outwardly the most impressive and seemingly climactic moment of the whole Eastern Liturgy, not ex-

<sup>53</sup> In his letter to the Ephesians St. Paul writes (5:25-27) that Christ Our Lord so loved the Church and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water (i.e. Baptism) . . . that He might *present it to Himself*, a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle . . . ; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

This passage is a kind of *locus classicus* for the Catholic doctrine of the liturgical Offertory. Our Lord presents the structure of His human life and growth within this world in His Divine Community, under the forms of His bread and wine, to Himself as He now is, ascended and at the right hand of the Father.

<sup>54</sup> At any rate, since the seventh century. The authority for this is Dr. E. F. Brightman. Cf. Mr. H. Hamilton Maughan's *The Liturgy of the Eastern Orthodox Church*, (London, 1916), p. 21, note 1.

<sup>55</sup> See Appendix III, page 200.

cepting the Consecration itself. And the preliminary prayers of the Offertory contain certain invocations, blessings, and allusions to sacrificial action which make this preparation of the bread and wine seem a kind of quasi-consecration. Theologians of the Eastern Church suggest in fact that the liturgical Consecration of the Elements does somehow begin with the Offertory, that is, at the time when they are presented by the members of Our Lord's social humanity within the doors of the building where the Memorial is to be performed. And this impression is heightened when we see the proffered Offerings, even before the central moment of formal Consecration, revered in a procession to the Altar, accompanied by lights, incense and music while the people bow before them and cross themselves.

Even in the Latin Rite, where we find the liturgical emphasis of the Offertory considerably reduced, the still unconsecrated bread when brought to the Altar is lifted up and offered to God with a prayer which refers to it as "this spotless Victim"—a phrase applicable in all strictness only to Our Lord Himself within the Sacramental Elements after being consecrated. And the poured wine, mingled with water within the Cup, is offered as "the Chalice of Salvation," a phrase scarcely appropriate to plain or ordinary wine.

In liturgical practice, therefore, both East and West, the bread and wine of the people's Offertory are clearly enough set forth as particular kinds of bread and wine. They are, in fact, the concrete summations of an additional content within Our Lord's humanity. They are the same kinds of additions to His Incarnate growth and experience as would have accrued from a new week of redeeming activity, of fresh social contacts, of more widely extending empirical human knowledge, of more deeply developing religious teaching, in the individual historical life of the Man Jesus. For this bread and wine emerge within and through a Community which since Pentecost has been constituted by the enabling action of the Holy Spirit as a social continuation of that same life. As material objects they have not been produced by unaided man; neither do they emerge from

an unredeemed social process. They emerge from the social relationships of a Community which lives and moves in a new Incarnational World, a Communion of the Holy Ghost, a world which continues to clothe the Divine Logos in an ordered pattern whose social perfection triumphs over the difficulties which inhere in the disordered human time-process. They are thus material objects embodying structures of human life still on the natural level of this world, but not of *the fallen* world; for they have been rescued from the meshes of Original Sin. They have been perfected thus by Our Lord Himself as He enlarges the boundaries of His redeeming action through the growth of His social humanity. The bread and wine at the Offertory set forth structures in history which have been brought out of the fallen world into the first stage of its redemption.

#### THE CONSECRATION: THANKSGIVING AND REMEMBRANCE

From the Offertory, the Liturgy of the Memorial moves to the central part of its action which is called the Consecration. Here, both in word and prescribed gesture, it follows as closely as possible the Scriptural records of Our Lord's Institution at the Last Supper. The earliest written account of this is found in one of the letters of St. Paul.<sup>56</sup> Here we read that the Lord Jesus in the same night in which He was betrayed took bread: and when He had given thanks He brake it and said: Take, eat: this is my Body which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also He took the cup, when He had supped, saying: This cup is the New Testament in my Blood: This do ye, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me.

The two chief actions of the Consecration of the people's offerings of bread and wine are therefore those of Thanksgiving for all of God's gifts and mercies—including His present provision that His people may make this Offering to Him—and of making a Memorial of His Incarnate life, of His death, His resurrection and ascension. The Church's prayer of Consecration is invariably so framed as to include all these elements. It reaches its solemn climax in the

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<sup>56</sup> 1 Cor. 11:23-25. About A. D. 55.

recital of Our Lord's recorded words at His own first setting forth of the Bread and Wine: This is my Body . . . . This is my Blood.

### THE MEANING OF THANKSGIVING

In present day usage, the popular concepts both of thanksgiving and of making a memorial (doing something in remembrance of somebody) have almost completely lost the full sense in which they are employed in the Church's Liturgy. This is unfortunate from the point of view of liturgical clarity. Certainly the members of Our Lord's social humanity have a duty to understand the liturgical meaning of the terms they use.

As commonly understood, to give thanks represents little more than a verbal exchange of courtesy between two individuals, one of whom has received a favor or gift and the other of whom has bestowed it. It may also signify an attitude of genuine gratitude on the part of the recipient, and it may include an implied assurance that the recipient stands ready to make a return favor or gift should the opportunity arise. But to give thanks in this sense alone remains a transaction which expresses only mutual attitudes between two people who have been involved in a giving-receiving relationship. It is not a transaction in which the gifts themselves are involved as material objects. To give thanks does not do something to any material object. In other words, it is not a transitive verbal expression. Thanksgiving is not an action which effects a change of state or causes a transition in those gifts for which the thanks are returned.

In liturgical use, however, the concept of Giving Thanks does have precisely this other, active, transitive sense. The original Greek word meaning to give thanks, *eucharistein*,<sup>57</sup> conveys in earliest Christian usage the idea not alone of returning thanks (in our present day sense) to God for benefits received, but also of acting upon the Offerings of bread and wine in such wise that they become the Body and Blood of Our Lord. Liturgical Thanksgiving is synonymous with Consecration. St. Justin Martyr, writing in the

<sup>57</sup> εὐχαριστέω

middle of the second century, says that the Church “Eucharistises”—“Thanksgives”—her Offerings into the Body and Blood of Our Lord. He speaks of the consecrated material objects as “Eucharistised”—“Thanksgiven”—Things. The consecrated Elements therefore are themselves called by the name of *Eucharist*, and he states without qualification that through the action of Thanksgiving they have become the Body and Blood of that Jesus who was made flesh.<sup>58</sup> It is Thanksgiving in this deep sense of effecting a Consecration, of causing a substantial change to take place in the bread and wine of the just completed Offertory so that they become the Body and Blood of Christ, which lends to Our Lord’s Memorial its most ancient and most universal name: The Holy Eucharist.<sup>59</sup>

#### THE MEANING OF REMEMBRANCE

Thanksgiving blends immediately into explicit words of Memorial. Here again, the word “Memorial” used by Our Lord when He said do this as a Memorial (in remembrance) of me, is rendered in the texts of the Scripture records by a Greek equivalent of His own original Aramaic which is almost untranslatable into English.

For when in English usage we call some man or the events of his life to remembrance, it clearly implies that

<sup>58</sup> St. Justin Martyr: *First Apology*.—Hipollitus also has equivalent expressions. The expression “Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving” of the Anglican Liturgies means properly: “Sacrifice of Praise and Consecrated Bread and Wine.” The words follow the Consecration.

<sup>59</sup> The name “Mass”—Latin, *Missa*—is a popular word found only in the West. It is probably derived from the words pronounced by the Deacon at the conclusion of the Liturgy notifying the congregation that it may disperse: *Ite Missa est*.

Calling the Eucharist by the name Mass sometimes arouses antagonism, because in some quarters it is indissolubly associated with what are thought to be grave ecclesiastical abuses. If the word Eucharist is given preference, we must then be quite clear that while we reject abuses, we are not also subtly rejecting essential truths about the Liturgy for which the name Mass, in spite of associations in certain minds, does really stand. In the West, Eucharist and Mass, rightly understood, are synonymous. They ought therefore to be interchangeable in common speech.

the man is absent, and that the events now recalled are done and past. These things are brought up in the minds of others now present, but if the man were himself in our midst, or if the events recalled were even at that time going on, we would make no Memorial of them. To do so would involve a contradiction between present reality and that which is implied by the English word "Memorial."

On the other hand, the *Anamnesis* of Our Lord's Body and Blood is not this kind of calling to mind of His absent Self, and of His past life, death, resurrection and ascension. It is on the complete contrary, His own appointed method of causing Himself to be present. It causes the historically past events of His life to emerge here and now in their eternal reality, and in such wise that His social humanity may be taken into, be included within, those very events. It should be recalled that Our Lord Himself celebrated His own first Memorial, the Last Supper, while He was physically present among His disciples still clothed in His individual human body in this world. Yet it is no contradiction in terms if we call this same Last Supper a Memorial of Him. If there is any distinction to be made between the one, the unique, Last Supper, and the Memorial of the post-pentecostal Sacrifice of the Church it consists in this: in the Last Supper the eternal events of His death on the Cross, of His resurrection and of His ascension, were made present by Our Lord in concomitance with His Body and His Blood, by His overruling intention, out of a future history; while ever since Pentecost these culminating events of His earthly life are made present to His social humanity out of an historical human past. The concept of a "Memorial" as used in the Scriptural accounts of the Last Supper as well as in the recurring Liturgy of the Church, has the same sense, and applies with equal exactness in both cases. Thus the Memorial of the Liturgy is a genuine re-calling of something. Very different from the mere contriving of a vivid subjective recollection on the part of those present, it is a true calling back of the thing itself. It is a causing of something which is historically past, but eternally available, to re-emerge into a contemporaneous situation, so that it re-

establishes its active operation here and now.<sup>60</sup>

Thus in that solemn moment when a convened group of Our Lord's social humanity puts forward its Offertory of bread and wine, when it utters its Eucharistic Prayer and makes that Memorial according to the Institution of Him who is here re-called, Our Lord responds to the New Covenant which He Himself has thus established. He emerges to take again His own Gifts into Himself. The ascended Body moves to comprehend the earthly body. Our Lord reopens that bridge of transit between the levels of the contingent and of the absolute, between true humanity and Very God, which He alone has built through the way of His Incarnation and which He alone can therefore supply. Upon His Cross, now come again with Him into human history out of its eternity, He conveys the newly perfected structures put forward within His earthly humanity into His risen humanity ascended on high at the right hand of God.<sup>61</sup>

#### CONSECRATION AS SACRIFICE

The Consecration is therefore a true Sacrifice; for sacrifice consists essentially in this kind of conveyance of a structure perfected on the level of God's natural world into the level of God's transcendent Being. Also, the Priest who here effects this Sacrifice is Our Lord; for it is He alone who, receiving the offering within the content of His Incarnation, can effect the necessary transit. And He too, as on His individual Cross, is also Victim; for it is He who, working within His social humanity as this grows in a fallen world, has elicited the necessary bread and wine for the Offertory in such wise that these take form as increments in the con-

<sup>60</sup> See "The Eucharistic Prayer," an Essay by Fr. Gregory Dix, O. S. B. in *The Parish Communion* (A. G. Hebert, Ed.), (London, 1937), pp. 120-121. The arguments for this exegesis of the Greek *Anamnesis* are also developed by Fr. Dix in an article in *Theology*, Vol. xxviii (1934), pp. 193-195. In a recent and valuable book, *The Shape of the Liturgy*, (London, 1943, but available in the United States only since the present text was written), Fr. Dix has both recapitulated and extended his earlier arguments in cogently definitive form.

<sup>61</sup> Nicene Creed.

tent of the expanding pattern of His socially continuing earthly life. Thus, fresh structures which accrue within the progressive process of the redemption of the world are clothed upon Him as Victim. They are conveyed by Him as Priest into the Glory of His divinity.

#### PRIEST AND VICTIM WITHIN THE CONSECRATION

Within the Being of Our Lord, His function as Priest and His function as Victim do not have individuated existences. As Priest and as Victim, He is but One Christ.

When, however, His Incarnation within this world becomes socially diversified, then these two functions also become representatively individuated within His social humanity. Thus, as Victim corresponding to His individually offered humanity, the Church puts forward in her Offertory her necessary contributions to the Incarnation under the forms of bread and wine. So too every group within the Church puts forward its human representative to serve within the social Incarnation as a continuing human expression of Our Lord's eternal Priesthood. Our Lord then ratifies this human representative in a Sacrament known as Holy Order. The humanly chosen Priest is thus empowered to represent the Divine Community in the performance of its allotted, participating share in the setting forth of Our Lord's Memorial. The human priest, properly authorized by the Church and Sacramentally endowed by Our Lord, stands at the Altar as the individuated earthly representative of His mediating, sacrificing action within His Memorial.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>62</sup> Those representative men who are to be the principal priests (i.e. the Bishops) of the Catholic Church ought first to be put forward by democratic choice from among the laity whom they are to represent. After being thus democratically chosen they will have the priestly function and character bestowed upon them through consecration in Holy Order by other already consecrated members of the Church's ministry. But as representing the corporate body of the laity they should be democratically chosen.

It is a serious and, indeed, a dangerous abuse when in any section of the Catholic Church the Bishops come to be selected by the exercise of an undemocratic, popularly non-responsible human authority, even when that authority is exercised by other Bishops, or by the Bishop of Rome alone.

But it cannot be too strongly emphasized that Our Lord's Priesthood still resides essentially in His Incarnation as a whole. If the life of His Incarnate Community on earth partakes of His Incarnate life, then His Priesthood is a function of that whole Community. The Memorial of His Body and Blood is an organic, metabolic movement within His One Body, a Body which has both its earthly and its heavenly constitution. Therefore, the act of Sacrifice, like the act of the Offertory, is carried through by Our Lord with the involving participation of His entire social humanity. The individual human priest stands as an authorized representative both of the ascended Lord and of His social body still within this world. But the Lord's Memorial is the concern of His Body as a whole.

#### REPRESENTATIVE CHARACTER OF THE CHURCH'S MINISTERS

Within the Liturgy, this purely representative function of the human priest is commonly recognized, both East and West, by subduing his necessary collateral, but merely human functions as much as possible. For example, the priest does not wear his customary clothes which normally characterize him as a human individual. He wears the

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The bestowal of priesthood comes from Our Lord Himself as High Priest. This is therefore properly mediated through the already existing representatives of that Priesthood in the Church in earth. But all the laity should have their authoritative voice in putting forward that representative from among them who is to receive the priesthood individually in their corporate behalf.

The early Church was always clear about this democratic principle and guarded it scrupulously in practice. Local Christian groups chose the man to be consecrated as their Bishop by popular acclaim.

But when ecclesiastical authority presumes not merely to consecrate Bishops (its proper function), but also (as in the modern Roman Communion) to appoint the candidates for consecration without reference to the lay will, then we have an intrusion of an arbitrary, undemocratic human authoritarianism within the Church which is incompatible with full rational participation of all her members in her life. And when choice of candidates is made by a popularly non-responsible lay, or even non-Church authority (as in the Established Church of England) the abuse is potentially even more flagrant. It is an abuse which partakes of the evil, arbitrary authoritarianism of what we have come to call fascism.

clothes—the vestments—which are the peculiar and traditional property of the Divine Community.<sup>63</sup> The priest's movements and manual gestures are formalized and prescribed. He does not move within the Memorial as an individual; he obeys the directions of the group he represents. The Priest, *qua* priest, is a man under Orders in every sense of the word. At the liturgically central moment of the Consecration even the individual voice of the priest is decently and properly lowered so that his voice as that of an individual man may not take an exclusive precedence over the vocal participation of his fellow members. For the traditional and prescribed words of the Liturgy should be as familiar to every member of the sacrificing group as they are to the individual priest. The priest, therefore, may not here intrude his individual humanity. He may but lead his fellow members in their common corporate act. He does this by careful observance of certain commonly understood positions and gestures while he recites the Eucharistic Prayer in a reverently inaudible voice. He thus fulfils—but does not transgress—his authorized representative capacity. His function on its human side is here analogous to that of an orchestral conductor. The conductor reads the score silently. He plays no instrument as an individual—still less does he attempt to play every instrument at once! But he both represents and leads the orchestra as a whole, while each individual member makes his own necessary, functional contribution. Thus does the human priest lead the Divine Community representatively, while the Community corporately makes its appointed Memorial of Our Lord's Body and Blood.

#### THE HOLY COMMUNION

Reception of the Holy Communion follows immediately upon the Consecration. The members of the Divine Community who have brought forward their common life and the fruits of their common work as a corporate offering to Our Lord for His reception and consecration under forms of bread and wine, now come forward themselves to receive

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<sup>63</sup> See Appendix IV, page 202.

again these same Consecrated Gifts into their continuing corporate life. They thus receive Our Lord's very Body and Blood and, by a necessary concomitance, they receive Him in His totality. At the same time, and by a like concomitance, they receive again those structures of a redeemed world which had been garnered within the redeeming life-process of their Community for the preceding Offertory. And since these earthly Offerings, only contingently perfected within His social humanity here below, have now been conveyed into an absolute perfection through the transit just completed within the re-emerged Sacrifice of the Cross, they are returned to the Divine Community by Our Lord in His bestowal of the Holy Communion. They are returned out of the absolute level of His ascended life, of His divine nature, into the contingent level of this natural world. They are thus ready to form that adequate basis which is required for the continuing prospective life of the same Community which, at the outset, brought them forward in its Offertory. The Community is in this way made ready once more to resume its own living growth within this world without any interruption of its natural continuity, *but none the less upon the basis of the absolutely perfected structure of its own past now, after complete Sacrifice, returned to it again.* In this way, the whole cycle of Metacosmosis is Sacramentally completed by Our Lord for His socially extending post-pentecostal humanity.

#### OUR LORD'S MEMORIAL THE HEART OF HIS SOCIAL HUMANITY

Thus does the Memorial of Our Lord's Body and Blood beat rhythmically within the body of His social humanity. It beats as a heart beats at the center of a living animal body. The movement of the Liturgy does in fact manifest within the physical world the beating of the Sacred Heart of Our Lord Himself; and the Blood which flows to and from this Heart, imparting life and ever renewed creative power to the body of the Divine Community, is the Life-Blood of the Incarnate Son of God.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Everyone taking part in the Memorial should, as a general rule, make his Holy Communion. Otherwise the metacosmic cycle is left

incomplete in every individual instance of failure to communicate. An elaborate rendition of the Liturgy without the Communions of all the laity assisting—sometimes dubbed “High Mass without Communions”—is really a scandalous abuse.

Every member of the laity present should participate in the Offerory, and his individual offering, corporately integrated with Our Lord’s social humanity, will thus be received into an absolute perfection in the Sacrifice of the Consecration. If large numbers of those who are received within the Sacrifice fail to receive Our Lord again together with their own living contributions to His humanity back into their continuing lives, they go forth from the Memorial left, as it were, hanging between heaven and earth. Their own substantial basis for a continuing earthly life and action has not been returned to their possession. The Memorial is thus made to seem like a heart which receives the life blood of a body, but is prevented from re-dispensing it to the body again. High Mass is certainly the normal method of the Church for performing Our Lord’s Memorial, but this ought to take place in such wise that all those who assist may communicate within the liturgical action.

It may happen, for certain unusual but adequate reasons, that among any large number assisting in the Sacrifice, there are found a few who are really inhibited from making their Communions at that time. The portions of bread which these non-communicating attendants have offered will therefore remain after all others have communicated. These should be reserved reverently in a properly provided receptacle—commonly called a Tabernacle—and thus kept either until the non-communicating individuals may return to receive them, and thus individually complete their own metacosmic cycles; or else until other individual members of the group may receive them (e.g. the sick or the dying). If others thus receive them in Communion, the metacosmic cycle is completed representatively on behalf of the temporarily defaulting members, as well as on behalf of the individuals actually communicating under their forms.

The one thing which ought certainly to be excluded is the post-Communion consumption of all the remaining consecrated Breads at one time by the officiating priest. The priest in such cases has already made his own individual Holy Communion within the Memorial. He has no delegated representative authority whatever to make a kind of collective mass Communion after the celebration of the Memorial and immediately after his own individual Communion. He has no authority to do this strange thing on behalf of others who have been unable to communicate with him at that time. He has, perhaps, even less authority to do this than he has to make a collective mass Offertory without the individual gifts of the laity.

Therefore, the consecrated portions of Bread must be reserved until they can be reappropriated by other individual members of Our

Lord's social body. Furthermore, they must be appropriated by making a Holy Communion. For Our Lord emerges within His Memorial not merely to receive the Offerings of His social body, but to return Himself in Holy Communion to its members. It is a shocking thing that Breads under whose forms He is thus conveyed should habitually be consumed without Communion, as it were merely to get them out of the way!

If there are ill members of the Community who know in advance that they cannot attend the Memorial, but who wish to communicate, these should be encouraged to send in their Offerings of bread by the hands of other lay friends. Or the priest may be specifically authorized to act as deputy presenting the hosts of the unavoidably absent. But if this is impossible, absent members may always communicate with the consecrated Breads remaining from the Offerings of the few non-communicants of some previous Memorial.

## VIII

### The Liturgy and the Atonement

#### SINS AND CONTINGENCIES

EVERY OFFERTORY put forward by any group of the Divine Community of Our Lord's social humanity suffers from two kinds of limitations.

One of these is derived from the conditions imposed by man's situation within the environment of this fallen world. These are those residual limitations which Original Sin imposes upon the process of man's redemption so long as this process moves solely within what we have called its first stage. Limitations of this kind we discovered even in the perfected individual humanity of Our Lord Himself. They are called the contingencies of the Offertory.

Another set of limitations comes from the actual sins committed by members of the Divine Community during the period of the preparation of any given Offertory. Limitations of this kind can never be either necessary or proper to any perfected fruit of Our Lord's Incarnation within this world. In other words, they are not contingencies at all, but defects. Defects, as distinct from contingencies, are not to be found within the individual humanity of Our Lord; for His humanity, although contingent, was free from all sin.<sup>65</sup>

True contingencies within the Offertory are dealt with by Our Lord within that following Consecration to which every Offertory looks forward. As we have seen, they are there converted into their absolute counterparts, as the contingently perfected structures of the Offertory come to

<sup>65</sup> Hebrews. 4:15. It is here stated that He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. "Tempted," in this context, may be interpreted as "including contingencies." "Without sin" certainly means "without defects."

be included within the transit of the Cross and are thus received into the level of the absolute perfection of Our Lord's risen Body and Blood. But just as actual defects were not present in that original transit of the Cross which was established with Our Lord's individual humanity at His own crucifixion, so too they are not dealt with by Him within His liturgical Consecration. Only a contingently *perfected* Offertory is fit to be put forward for the Consecration. Defects must in some way be eliminated before the Divine Community may presume to place its Offertory upon Our Lord's Altar for His acceptance within the movement of His Holy Sacrifice.

We shall presently see that defects or sins within the Offertory are dealt with by Our Lord through their conversion into contingencies before the event of the Consecration, so that then, as contingencies taken together with all those already present in the structure of the Offertory from other sources, they are capable of being received into His waiting absolute perfection.<sup>66</sup>

It is, of course, Our Lord alone who has power to accomplish either of these necessary actions upon both sins and contingencies. This re-creative power applied in these connections is usually spoken of as the power of His Atonement. Our Lord alone can convert defects into contingencies. He alone can accept contingencies into the level of His absolute perfection in eternity. Yet although the application of the power of the Atonement remains exclusively His work, nevertheless there are also certain prior cooperating conditions laid down for all members of His social humanity when they invoke this special boon. And the fulfilment of these conditions is required before those who present their Offertory may rightfully expect His creatively healing

<sup>66</sup> "Waiting" in the sense intended by Our Lord when He says "I go to prepare a place for you," adding "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." (John. 14:2-3). Thus Our Lord waits behind the Consecration to accept an additional content into His risen humanity which He is to receive in and through the Offerory of His social humanity. The words which St. John here attributes to Our Lord seem saturated with metacosmic allusion.

and atoning response to their own utter need. Furthermore, when these prior conditions are not fulfilled to the utmost by any Sacramental group, those who so presume may run the risk of ruin instead of the atoning healing of Our Lord.<sup>67</sup>

In addition, while the power of the Atonement, as we have just said, must be invoked upon the defects within the Offertory before the Consecration, and while it is then subsequently applied to contingencies within the movement of the Consecration, the contingencies of the Offertory themselves need to be further separated into three sub-groups. For the invocation of the Atonement upon each of these three groups has its own specific prior conditions and involves its own peculiar sets both of practical resolutions and corresponding actions. And these differ according to the group of contingencies under consideration.

We must therefore attempt a more detailed analysis of the applications of the Atonement to both sins and contingencies according to their various conditions and kinds.

#### DEFECTS WITHIN THE OFFERTORY: PENANCE AND ABSOLUTION

It is a saddening fact, but one which must be realistically faced, that when any typical group of the Divine Community brings forward its Offertory of bread and wine, its members find themselves forced to admit that in one way or another they have introduced within the structure of its history certain defects which derive from their own shortcomings and sins.

We have already pointed out that in so far as the Offertory possesses to any degree the pattern of the perfection of Our Lord's humanity this must be recognized as exclusively His creation. Nevertheless, He wills to perfect every Offertory within and through a human group whose members are always enlisted to cooperate with Him upon a basis of a rational and free allegiance to His redeeming purpose. The inner freedom of no member is ever overruled, nor is an individual human will disregarded on any occasion whatever. No member is ever reduced to the status of an automaton. And although, like the first Apostles themselves,

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<sup>67</sup> Matt. 22: 11-14; I Cor. 11:29-30.

those who are baptized into Our Lord's humanity are freed from the impossible burden of Original Sin, and although they are also given a peculiar grace by virtue of their membership in Him to avoid all voluntary dereliction, nevertheless—again, like the Apostles—they are not automatically restrained from human folly and the perversion of their human wills. They are restrained from post-baptismal sin only by Our Lord's grace working in and through their free and rational lives.

So far as we know, Our Lord alone as an individual within this world prepared a unit of humanity so perfected that it was without any defect whatever either of Original or of actual sin. It was this unit which provided the Offertory of the bread and wine of His individual natural body and blood as this took form during His human life on earth. Because He Himself has accomplished this and, in so doing, has initiated a social life-process under the form of His Baptized Community, extending His individual humanity in such wise as to be relieved from the otherwise unconquerable barriers of Original Sin, it is at least conceivable that any group of this Community which succeeds Him in the Incarnation might, through His continuing power, bring forward a similarly perfected Offertory free as was His individual Offertory from the taint of actual sin. Yet this is certainly not the usual performance of His social humanity. For even while His members try to follow Him, try by His grace to throw themselves completely into the corporate life of His perfection, they all too often fail. They all too often reintroduce a sinful disorder within the very boundaries of His potentially perfect social Incarnation.

Now this kind of disorder introduced into the preparation of the bread and wine within the Divine Community itself constitutes a defect of a very grievous nature. For Our Lord's social humanity has been given the potentiality of avoiding this kind of defection. It has the power, if this be rightly used, of redeeming those portions of the fallen world which it touches into a new and unblemished—although contingent—order upon the natural level of this life, because the one problem completely unsolvable from a

human standpoint, that of Original Sin, has here been solved by Our Lord. It follows that voluntary sin committed by baptized members of His Community is far worse than any disorder to be found within the environing world, because this is a marring of a newly created perfection first established by Our Lord and then freely entrusted into the hands of His Community for a further and a wider building. This kind of sin has the character of a betrayal like that of the denials of Peter or the kiss of Judas. Furthermore, it betrays both Our Lord Himself and all other members of the Community; for it tends to vitiate that corporate enterprise of the preparation of the Offertory to which all members of Our Lord's social humanity are otherwise unitedly bending their common efforts.

In addition, voluntary disorders introduced within the Divine Community are highly and dangerously infective. Like the first disorders in God's old creation which set going the irretrievable disaster of Original Sin, they initiate another train of difficulties within Our Lord's New Creation which are analogous to, but clearly more virulent than, the difficulties of Original Sin within the old. *Corruptio optimi pessima.*<sup>68</sup>

Our Lord's re-creative power must therefore be invoked upon the defects within the structure of the Offertory before it may be borne to the Altar. The prior conditions laid upon all members of His social humanity before they may ask this kind of intervention in their behalf are those of careful self-examination, frank confession of faults thus unveiled and an act of penance for these derelictions, coupled with a resolution for the future that, by Our Lord's grace, such derelictions of the human will as have here introduced the disorders now discovered shall not reoccur.

Confession of the individual parts played in the introduction of whatever voluntary disorders are discovered within the structure of any given Offertory must, of course,

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<sup>68</sup> Alexander Pope paraphrased this Latin saying with his line: "Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds." It is salutary to recall that the lilies that fester in the hands of baptized sinners are the Lilies of the Annunciation!

be made to God. For it is from God alone that there proceeds the power of their radical reparation. However, they must also be confessed before the fellowship of Our Lord's Community as a whole; for an individually introduced defect carries a corporately damaging reference within the common Offertory, a reference which concerns all other members of the Community. For a Liturgical Christian there are no strictly private sins. If Our Lord is betrayed within the common redeeming enterprise of His corporate humanity, each and every one of His members is harmed by this betrayal. If the Offertory is rendered unfit for presentation at the Altar by one member, the intended Sacrifice is equally impeded for all the others. There must therefore be mutual confession within the Community. If demanded by circumstances, confession must be accompanied by corresponding acts of reparation or material restitution. There must be a movement of mutual forgiveness among all members of the Divine Community, even while individual derailedictions are being confessed to God.<sup>69</sup>

This latter condition is fulfilled by the discipline of individual confession in the presence of a priest who then acts as an official representative both of Our Lord's re-creative absolving power and also of the forgiveness of the whole human Community which has been sinned against. Within this social act of confession—commonly called the Sacrament of Penance—, and under the authority committed representatively to His priest, Our Lord responds. His atoning action is Sacramentally mediated, and the penitent's disordered contributions to the Offertory are rectified. At the same time the Sacramental Confession and Absolution extend Our Lord's forgiving and creatively restoring action to the tangled corporate damage caused by the individual sins of the penitent. In this way the structures

<sup>69</sup> A so-called General Confession with an ensuing Absolution now occurs as an element in nearly all Liturgies of Our Lord's Memorial. In such a Confession, of course, no specific sins may be publicly mentioned. However, individuals should at this point mentally recall the personally known defects which they have introduced into their Offertory in order that these may be particularized for the invocation of Our Lord's Atonement.

of the offered bread and wine are given the full status of the contingent perfection of His humanity. Actual sins then no longer remain as defects within the structure of the Offertory. They are converted into contingencies. The bread and wine are then made available in the completeness of their historical structures for presentation for Our Lord's further reception within His Consecration, within the transit of the Cross.

One word of caution in this present connection ought to be added. A sin, considered objectively as a past event, cannot be obliterated from the history of the preparation of any portions of bread and wine. God cannot make a wrong deed committed in the past to be as if it had not occurred at all. He can, however, weave its otherwise disastrous present effects within the Offertory into the pattern of His human perfection, in such wise that these defects lose their inhibiting character and assume the character of true contingencies. And in this converted form they no longer block the movement of the Offertory towards the Altar. Members of the Divine Community, with all sins confessed and absolved, still retain in a certain sense the marks of these sins within their Offertory. A member's lie, for example, once told, cannot be historically "untold," even though it be corrected later by an act of truthful reparation to some fellow member. But a lie absolved can become a contingency within the Offertory in the sense that Our Lord's Atonement can eradicate its evil effects within the present time. And within the individual consciousness, its mark—or memory—may become an element of positive experience which may enable the one who has sinned, but has been absolved, better to recognize approaching dangerous situations in the future and so to avoid telling other lies.

Finally, we must carefully avoid the confusing heresy of thinking that a defect introduced into the Offertory is in some strange—or even mystical—manner really a good thing because by Our Lord's atoning power it may be converted into a positive element of content—contingent, to be sure, but nevertheless a real one—within the pattern of His perfected humanity. This is a scandalous error into which cer-

tain Christians in the past have been betrayed. But it is nevertheless a joyful truth that upon the conditions of confession, penance and amending resolution, Our Lord can absolve and thus reperfect to His use within His Offertory even voluntary human derelictions, once these have been committed—derelictions which would otherwise be utterly fatal. Herein is seen most surely the marvel of the power of Our Lord in His Incarnation in that He can make *all* things work together for good to them that love Him!<sup>70</sup>

#### CONTINGENCIES: THEIR CLASSIFICATION AND THE CONDITIONS FOR THEIR CONSECRATION

Once all defects are converted through Confession and Absolution into contingencies within the structure of the Offertory, the bread and wine of the Divine Community may be moved to Our Lord's Altar. There He waits to receive these contingently perfected increments of His Incarnation into the content of His absolute perfection, conveying them through the door of His Consecration into His risen life. But even at this point, His reception of contingencies through His atoning power within the transit of the Cross itself imposes certain cooperating conditions upon the members of His Community, and these must also be understood and fulfilled.

The contingencies of the Offertory may, as we have said, be distinguished in three general groups. These are as follows.

Firstly, there are those contingencies which are capable of being reduced or alleviated by practical action on the part of Our Lord's members, and whose reduction must be sought and worked for by all Christians under pain of finding them reconverted into defects or sins within the Offertory.

Secondly, there are those which, with the passage of time and the widening spread of the Incarnation in the world, may be reduced, but whose reduction—although it may be thankfully accepted if it occur—may not be deliberately

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<sup>70</sup> See Appendix V, page 205.

sought or aimed at under pain of finding them reconverted into defects within the Offertory.

Thirdly, there are certain seemingly irreducible contingencies which, so far as present knowledge enables us to judge, will always be found in every Offertory and which, in the very nature of the case, will never be eliminated while the Sacramental body of Our Lord continues its growth and work within this world.

#### THE CONTINGENCIES OF THE FIRST GROUP

In the first group there belong those contingencies which derive from a kind of mutual interpenetration between the environment of the fallen world and the new organic society of the Incarnation, while this society is growing within the world, feeding upon it as it were, redeeming its disordered elements by vital appropriation into the order of Our Lord's social humanity. For during the development of this process, so long as the redeeming society remains relatively small in its compass, its members in obtaining their bread and wine necessarily have temporarily to avail themselves of many arrangements and relationships in the world around them, even while these still remain greatly at variance with the principles of that redeemed order within which the bread and wine for Our Lord's Memorial are required.

We have already touched upon this difficulty, pointing out that the Divine Community has thus far made relatively little headway in the task of changing the economic, social and political systems of its environment into an order even approximately based upon the motivating power of Christian love and brotherly cooperation. Instead, the world's present arrangements are grounded in the principle of self-aggrandizement at the expense of neighbors—a principle which is applied alike to the operations of individuals, regional groups and sovereign nations.<sup>71</sup>

It is necessary to emphasize this latter difficult fact, because many Christians seem to be ignorant of it. For our actual world environment is so evilly disordered that if its extreme individualism, which leads to murderous competi-

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<sup>71</sup> See Appendix VI, page 212.

tion, is at times somewhat mitigated during the so-called peacetime periods of our present economic process, this is really and basically contrary to, and therefore detrimental to, the full application of the competitive principles by which our system avowedly operates. This is proved by the fact that some of our keenest secular leaders recognize the dangers to their world which lurk in consistent plans for cooperation in economic affairs. For in the midst of some of the difficulties (business depressions, mass unemployment) which a system of unbridled, individualistic competition brings upon itself even in so-called peacetime, an experimental approach within limited areas of business is sometimes made toward the development of a cooperative economy, that is, an economy based upon the goals of mutual social welfare and benefits, rather than of individualistic profit making. And this is at once greeted (even by many respectable Christians) as a threat to Free Enterprise.<sup>72</sup> It is attacked as actually detrimental to the most desirable type of American (and British) character! It is then pointed out that cooperative enterprise, which also requires socially limited material property rights together with social authority distributed on a basis other than that of mere ownership of wealth, will give us a nation of government parasites, drones and moral weaklings.<sup>73</sup> In other

<sup>72</sup> E.g. We may recall criticism levelled at the United States Government T. V. A. power development in the decade of the '30s.

<sup>73</sup> It is curious to find that when a government freely provides for millions of its citizens the best possible clothing, the best food, the best physical care, the best transportation facilities, the best housing, the best procurable entertainment, the best specialized education for selected individuals, all distributed solely on a basis of admitted need and of tested ability to consume such gifts in a socially profitable manner, this is admired not merely as a contribution to public welfare, but as a boon to universal happiness and a builder of corporate morale—provided the recipients of these socially furnished bounties are engaged in the murderous art of waging international war!

But if such provision were socially made in times of peace, in return for nation-wide cooperative effort toward the common welfare of all citizens, this would be hailed as a design for national decadence!

Let us hope that when the members of the present world-wide

words, the fallen world's notion of "good character" is very far indeed from the character which would be normal to a Christian (and a rationally planned) cooperative system—a system in which Christian love might be put by those who possess it to a functionally practical and constructive purpose for it turns out that Christian love radically applied to the secular world of our time would break up its organized economy completely. Therefore, the fallen world of our environment rejects the Christian order as it rejects Christian love in everything except a superficial application. It continues to insist upon exalting that fine, individualistic "strength of character" which is seen at its best in the developed, but non-rational natures of jungle beasts.<sup>74</sup> And this kind of murderous anti-Christian individualism (admired as Free Enterprise and The American Way of Life) is supposed not merely to breed good characters, but is actually thought that in some mysterious manner it works the greatest good to the greatest number. Two world wars in one generation are the judgments of God's justice upon such criminal naïveté.

Yet it is out of an environmental world of this kind that armed forces return from their life recently mobilized for war, they may begin to see that it is only rational to mobilize in an analogous socially organized manner—instead of individualistically and competitively—for the arts of peace, for a common national and international cooperative welfare.

<sup>74</sup> This is why the fascist system of government and of industrial economy encourages a school of "philosophical" thought which openly advocates the suppression of the rational human intellect.

Fascism, being itself the enthronement by force of Capitalism Unashamed has seen more clearly than certain politically democratic nations that human reason is out of place within a framework of irrational, animal competition—especially when, as in fascist states, one small group of the competitors, following the logic of the whole process, have finally come out on top, and are thus able to eliminate the competitions of their lesser fellow citizens by force. In this kind of situation which is not merely the competition, but the triumph, of the beast, the special pleaders and apologists for the competitive victory begin to say that the highest type of man is found in a return to the beast. Away with Reason! "Thinking" is now to be done, not with the brain, but with the blood!

the bread and wine of the Divine Community are brought to the Altar, entraining—trailing in as it were—such disorders in the structures of their histories as would at first glance seem to render them utterly unsuitable for the Christian Offertory. The question therefore arises, how is it possible for the Divine Community to present such bread and wine before it has made a further headway in the re-ordering of the environing fallen world? From the human point of view it would almost seem as if the presence of so many and grave contingencies within the Offertory might be sufficient cause for the suspension of all celebrations of Our Lord's Memorial against the time when the bread and wine of the Divine Community may be prepared within a pre-ponderantly socialized industrial system, rather than within the present competitive one.

#### TIE ATTEMPTED REDUCTION OF THESE CONTINGENCIES BY SEVERING RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE WORLD

This question does begin to weigh upon the consciences of a good many Christians today. Certain groups of Catholic Christians appear to think that no widely extending solution can be found. They therefore advocate the withdrawal of Christians into small homogeneous groups, apart from, and thus as independent as possible of, the rest of their environmental world. It is claimed that such groups could be large enough to set up a simple, self-contained material economy based upon a Christian order and motivation. The great modern scientific techniques and mass production of the material amenities of life, in the nature of the case, could not be employed by such small communities. Life would have to be simplified. Members of these communities would have to live, as did their remoter ancestors, largely by tilling the soil. And the manufacture of material necessities would have to be carried on in a revival of handicrafts and artisanship. But at any rate, bread and wine could here be prepared as representing a more Christian, if relatively restricted, structure of human relationships. The disordered relationships characteristic of the world environing the small self-contained communities

would not have to be admitted even remotely—so it is argued—into the Offertory of the Altar.

This solution of the difficulties with which our first group of contingencies presents us has a strong appeal to a good many Catholics, especially those of the modern Roman obedience.<sup>75</sup> This is why it is mentioned here, even while it is to be immediately rejected. For it is open to two fatal objections. Firstly, it is not possible to achieve a really isolated social unit. Certain relationships with the outside world would have to be maintained, unless members are willing to return to living conditions of a medieval primitiveness. For no local community in a modern world could, for example, manufacture its own iron for agricultural implements, its own rubber, glass, plastics, and other necessary modern materials. More often than not it would have to buy coal for fuel. It would certainly have to buy oil and gasoline and very likely, electric power. It would use the money of the state. To obtain money, it would also have to sell certain of its products. Its actual economic, as well as cultural connections with the outside world would be myriad. We have mentioned only a few here, by way of example. No one either of knowledge or imagination could be deluded into thinking that a “self-contained” Christian Community would completely eliminate the difficulty of involving some—in practice there would be many—of the elements of its disordered environment within the preparation of its bread and wine. Therefore, this “solution” is no solution at all.

But secondly, it is open to the still graver criticism of being extricationist. It is an experiment which seems to renounce the problem of the redemption of the world as a hopeless one. It is complacently content to let the world at large go to hell, if only little islands of calm and over-

<sup>75</sup> The Distributist League, a movement in the Roman Communion in England advocated by Mr. Hilaire Belloc and the late G. K. Chesterton, seems to favor this plan. The same ideas have found adherents among Roman Catholics in the United States. The American Organ of this Distributist-Pacifist movement is now the *Catholic Worker*.

simplified perfection can be built about certain rural altars. It renounces, as being too difficult to master, the bulk of the fruits of modern scientific achievement. It thus rejects some of the greatest and finest positive achievements of the rational human mind. Therefore, at its best, this solution represents a pathetic and weakly romantic confusion. At its worst, it comes to mere arty-crafty defeatism.

### THE INCARNATIONAL METHOD OF DEALING WITH CONTINGENCIES

The proper Incarnational method of dealing with those environmental disorders which in our age survive in the secular historical structure of the Offertory, is by no means to flee them. Still less must there be made an attempt at group insulation from the world's environment. The Incarnational method is, instead, to develop a Sacramental group life of such vigor that through the redeeming, atoning power of Our Lord of which it is the vehicle it may triumph over whatever connections with environmental disorder are for the time being imposed upon the members of His Community. Connections with surviving disorders in the still unredeemed environmental world can then be appropriated creatively into the Offertory as true contingencies, and not as defects.

In this way, the elements within the historical structures of bread and wine which remain for the time being genuinely beyond all control of the Divine Community can be made available for the Consecration in a kind of interim way by the application of Our Lord's vital atoning power working in and through His Community. For example, when bread which has emerged from conditions of human injustice or the breach of the law of Christian love in the outside world is received within the Offertory, those elements of unredeemed secular disorder which it entrains can be made to take the same kind of contingent places within its perfected structure that Our Lord's own individual dealings with the surrounding unredeemed world of His day took in the structure of His individual humanity. For, as an individual, Our Lord Himself ate food which came to Him from a slave

society still untouched as a whole by His redeeming action. Yet the use He made of such food, once He had appropriated it, was a perfected use. His necessary relationships with the still unredeemed world, as these converged in Him, were wrought into a perfected pattern at His end of them, within His individual human unit. Such relationships, disordered though they still remained at their other ends, appeared in His humanity as contingencies rather than as defects. They were contingencies of our first group now under discussion.

The structures of the bread and wine of the Offertory are likewise perfected by Our Lord's same creative power as the disordered secular events and relationships residual within them converge into that Incarnational group which implements the redeeming order of His social humanity. The elements of their historical structures are perfected at the group's end of the relationships involved; and the still disordered elements of their histories within the outside world, as in Our Lord's individual case, appear here too as contingencies rather than as defects. And even though the immediate action of the Incarnational group upon its bread and wine be confined to mere purchase from the surrounding world, nevertheless, by virtue of Our Lord's Atonement such purchase becomes a kind of price of ransom from the fallen world. The structures of the bread and wine are, by this simple act, brought into the first stage of the process of human redemption. They become contingent, but none the less perfected structures, available for the Consecration within Our Lord's Memorial. And in this way, the Memorial can be performed with rhythmic regularity even long before the time that the organism of Our Lord's social humanity here in earth has been extended to encompass, and so to redeem, God's world in its entirety.

For the purpose of strengthening and deepening Our Lord's re-creative power within it, every Incarnational group must take form as a cell-like organic unit of His socially redeeming life. It must, in a proper sense, strive to emphasize the fact that it is a unit of a new social perfection clearly distinct from—in a manner indeed over against—the fallen

world of its environment. A unit cell of Our Lord's humanity must be quite unafraid to consolidate and to mature its distinct life and so to affirm the special, newly ordered quality of its own peculiar corporate structure; for it is indeed a social unit already received into the first stage of human redemption.

This affirmation of the possession of a new and peculiar organic being might, at first glance, seem to justify that very reproach of insulationism, of attempted separation from the world, which has just been decried. However, in this case the development of that sense of being a seed of a new world in Our Lord's Incarnation,—a world which shall supersede the old world of a fallen environment,—is properly developed not for the sake of separation from the old world, but for the sake of acquiring the necessary group strength and understanding to attack it and to deal with it intelligently, even with respect to its most difficult disorders. For only the members of a well consolidated Incarnational group can move freely, militantly, unafraid, within their environmental world, the more readily and determinedly to reorganize that world's relationships into patterns befitting the preparation of bread and wine for their Offertory.

It must therefore be the primary—and quite unashamed—concern of every Incarnational group to strengthen, enlarge and perfect in quality its own unit of redeemed ordered life. Such a group should emerge, in whatever time and place it finds itself, as a concrete, objective social manifestation of Our Lord's vital redeeming power. It must develop to the utmost fullness those habitual activities and cultural attitudes which are peculiar characteristics of a world newly re-created within the ordered wholeness of His social humanity. The prayers and meditations of its members must be habitually regular, sincere and purposeful. The fullness of its Sacramental life must be carefully maintained. But all this is not for the purpose of a kind of precious group insulation from its environment, but for the purpose of strengthening Our Lord's atoning power within its organism and the application of this power to the amelioration or correction of all persisting disorders of the fallen world environment.

Furthermore, it is probable—however unfortunate this may be—that in the outside world the various members of any given group will have but little contact one with another in those businesses and professions by which they severally gain their present livings. This is just another way of saying that the average Incarnational group of today controls relatively few of the practical relationships of the modern world—either commercial or intellectual—within the ambit of its own peculiar order. Members are therefore compelled continually to go forth from their true world to perform within their surrounding fallen world many of the functions necessary to the maintenance of life. It is essential, therefore, that they be provided with that understanding and courage which can come only from membership in some central Community of Our Lord's Incarnation, a Community in which His atoning power is creative and sustaining. It is only against such a background that they will be able to further Our Lord's work in their environing secular world and thus to attack the sources of those contingencies which, because of the many unredeemed relationships still encountered daily, crowd a multitude of potentially damaging elements into their Offertory of bread and wine. Only the vitally maintained creative power of Our Lord's Atonement in His Incarnation can triumph over these great difficulties and so receive portions of bread and wine, which contain such and so many objective evils within their secular historical structures, as contingently perfected things available for His Consecration. It is to this positive end that all Incarnational group life is to be definitely defined and intensively developed.

#### CONDITIONS FOR THE APPLICATION OF THE ATONEMENT TO CONTINGENCIES OF THE FIRST GROUP

Let us suppose that a certain Sacramental cell of Our Lord's social body has, by His grace, been given the power adequately to cope with its as yet unredeemed environmental disorders. Let us suppose, that is, that the power of Our Lord's Atonement within its corporate life is enabled here to emerge with sufficient strength to convert the cell's

present connections with external disorder into contingent, but none the less temporarily acceptable, elements within its Offertory. There is still a certain prior condition which must be fulfilled before this atoning power may be invoked and applied. Our Lord Himself expressed this condition both simply and directly when He said: If thou bring thy gift to the Altar and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift and go thy way. First be reconciled with thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.<sup>76</sup>

This condition applies obviously to the matter of actual voluntary sins committed by baptized members of the Divine Community. With the application of the Atonement in this connection we have just dealt in the consideration of Confession and Sacramental Absolution. Our Lord's condition implies in this case both confession of sin, and a proper effort at correction of past wrongs coupled with resolution not to commit the same wrongs in the future.

Historically speaking, it seems never to have been anything like so clear that this condition of Our Lord's concerning the gifts brought to His Altar also has parallel applications to the involuntary defects which, by reason of its evil structure, an unredeemed environing world habitually forces Christians to admit into the structures of their bread and wine. Christians have seemed to place such involuntary deficiencies—when they have been conscious of them at all—in the category of the inevitable, in the category of things about which, although they are doubtless deplorable, it is impossible to do anything. All too often Christians have even failed to take them into account at all, thinking of them at the most with a kind of sentimentally moral regret. Christians often become almost unconscious even of a sense of strain in these matters. They have not realized, therefore, that enveloping evils upon which they are forced in great measure to depend in the production of their gifts to Our Lord can, unless something is either done or resolved to be done about them, turn into

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<sup>76</sup> Matt. 5:23-24.

serious threats to the perfection of their Offertory of bread and wine.

Thus Christians who as individuals would guard carefully against telling deliberate lies, find it possible to earn their livings as modern salesmen, or advertising agents, or radio announcers, without even seeing that there is an incongruity between the commercial lying thus often forced upon them and their own personal truthfulness. People who would certainly refrain from using physical force to impose even their own rational opinions on others who disagree with them, for the reason that they have a genuine Christian respect for rational human freedom, have in past times found nothing incongruous in the forcible owning of whole classes of their fellow men, body and soul, when they have been born and conditioned in a slave-holding economic system. The same type of Christian today is apt to be completely unmindful of the fact that the economic system in which he gains his own living robs millions of subject colonial peoples of both their spiritual and physical freedoms. Christians who would never steal the property of their immediate neighbors find it possible to live on dividends which come out of an established capitalist system of industrial production which *in principle* robs the great bulk of our working people of their full and just share in the wealth which issues from their work. Christians who would never dream of committing an individual murder, for the most part fail even to view critically our mal-organized economic system which, by virtue of its constitutional structure, leads unavoidably to the mass murder of modern wars.<sup>77</sup>

The reasons for this seeming indifference to enforced social wrong-doing, as distinct from voluntary individual sinning, are manifold. Certainly one of the chief of them is

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<sup>77</sup> Unfortunately the majority of Catholics have not yet been led to think of the disorders of their individual lives in terms of an Incarnationally social reference. The Sacrament of Penance is seldom thought of as a social act perfecting the structure of a community life and thus moving to prepare an offering of perfected bread and wine. Today it is one of the major tasks of a vital Catholicism to recall nominal Catholics from exclusive preoccupation with sin as a purely individual matter, as a disorder in individual life only, without refer-

sheer ignorance. In times past, as in our modern world, the majority of Christians simply have not understood that political and economic systems could be organized on a constitutionally unchristian basis. They have not understood that whether they as individuals wished it or not they could thus be prevented from conducting their business and professional affairs according to the requirements of their religion. Especially in modern times, they have tended to view the current social and economic order as, in its constitution, morally indifferent. Thus they have been led to think that individual Christian virtue may be exercised in any such order. In fact, Christians often argue that "if everyone really did act like a Christian," our present economic and political arrangements would be greatly improved. This argument presupposes as a truth that social systems are disordered only because the individuals within them behave in individually evil ways.

An analysis the exact opposite of this would come nearer the truth. Our present system, for example, is so constituted on a basis of individualistic competition for profits that the universal practice of true Christian love and co-operation would not improve it, but would effect its collapse. On the other hand, just so long as the capitalist system as we now have it persists, the universal practice of Christian virtue will be inhibited, no matter what the intentions of the individuals may be. As a matter of fact both the environmental, socially structural difficulties, and the human moral difficulties have to be taken into account in the Christian approach to a solution of this problem. By way of illustration, let us suppose that an investigation of a certain automobile accident reveals two contributing causes. For one thing, the car is found to be outmoded,

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ence to the corporate Offertory of Our Lord's Memorial.

If the Church continues to be complacently concerned with individual sin and individual "salvation" apart from corporate redeeming growth, she will before long prepare a terrible punishment for herself at the hands of a contemptuous world. She will rob herself of much of her power of furthering Our Lord's Incarnationally redeeming work in this moment of crisis in world history. She will have continued her dreary surrender to an unchristian, extricationist religion.

structurally of a type unadapted to the exigencies of modern traffic. It is also found that the driver of the car was drunk at the time of the accident. We have here both an environmental, structural cause and a human, moral cause.

Clearly, for the sake of safety hereafter, we have to demand both a modernized mechanism and a sober driver. On this point we might expect universal agreement. But oddly enough, in analyzing our present economic disasters we do not find this kind of agreement. Materialists tend to say that the only thing wrong with the human world is the conflict enshrined constitutionally in our outmoded capitalist system of production. Christians—together with many non-dogmatic idealists—tend to say that there is nothing constitutionally wrong with the economic system, but that our troubles arise solely from human sin—in this connection usually called “greed” and “selfishness.” In other words, materialists seem to take the position that there was nothing amiss in the incident of the automobile accident except the outmoded car. Christians, on the other hand, seem to contend that there was nothing wrong except that the driver was drunk!

It may be remarked in passing that the materialists in this case seem slightly more on the practically correct side than the Christians. For a drunken driver might drive a mechanically perfect car without an accident, while the soberest of men would be almost bound to come to grief with a defective mechanism.

#### SCIENTIFIC ECONOMIC UNDERSTANDING A MODERN DEVELOPMENT

A rational, scientific understanding that the secular organization of the human social environment may effectively inhibit the nurture and the practice of Christian moral virtue, regardless of the intentions and wills of individual Christians, is of comparatively recent appearance in human history. Historically, Christians have often felt this difficulty. But they have had no scientific analysis to enlighten them and to guide them to solutions. Ignorance of this sort accounts for the fact that the Christian protest

against environing secular disorders has so often seemed blind and almost hysterical, devoid of scientific suggestions towards finding remedies.

For example, the Church of the first two centuries was deeply conscious that by the very fact of the tremendous newness of her own socially organized life, she carried a revolutionary threat to the established social and economic disorders of her day. Her members often refused to resort to secular law courts, because they realized that secular decisions would have been based upon unchristian presuppositions. Christian martyrs refused to burn incense to a deified Roman Emperor by way of protest against the evil basis of the political order. But nobody seems to have known what to do about the disorders of the secular world except to protest against them. No one seems to have had any idea that Christians, by careful planning and by united, organized action, might be able to attack their contemporary world and then reorganize it on the basis of more Christian social presuppositions. Indeed, the notion that man can rationally plan and then act socially to change the economic order of his corporate life has been historically largely absent from Christian thought. It is, shamefully enough, far from universally present to Christian thought today, even while the better elements of the secular world are beginning to realize that this kind of action lies open to rational man, quite apart from any religion whatever.

This kind of tension between the requirements of the bread and wine of a Christian social order and the realities of the organization of an unredeemed secular environment when keenly felt, but blindly confronted, by members of Our Lord's Community, has had some distressing—not to say perverting—consequences. In the early Church it gave birth to an irrational and emotional protest, which, whether we like to acknowledge it or not, must have given many an early Christian gathering something of the hysterical atmosphere of certain modern sectaries, such as the Holy Rollers. Another result was to cause some Christians to despair of the problem of the redemption of the world altogether. The more earnest of these betook themselves to

save their individual souls to desert hermitages and, later on, to extricationist monasteries. But the most widespread result was to reduce the requirements of the Christian life to a set of individualistic moral precepts and religious practices (a kind of legalistic payment of premiums for an after-death heaven-insurance), while at the same time permitting most people to carry on their secular affairs according to the established requirements of an unredeemed world without critical analysis and without protest of any sort. Every one of these consequences of Christian ignorance is discernible in the accepted conventional "Christianity" of our present time.

In view of our present day scientific knowledge concerning the possibilities of rational control and rational direction of desirable social and economic changes, there is no longer any excuse for those ignorances which have hitherto prevented Christians from dealing with the disorders of the environing world which tend so dangerously to vitiate the perfection of their Offertory. Therefore, when they now bring their gifts to the Altar, let them indeed stop to remember whether their brothers have aught against them; but let them do this with their minds guided and clarified by all the available knowledge of modern economic and technical science. For it is not merely certain unresolved personal quarrels which they must here recall. On the contrary, if it is a fact that the members of the Christian group have drawn some of the income with which they have just bought their bread and wine from a capitalist system so constituted that it necessarily (i.e. as a matter of scientific economic fact) robs hundreds of thousands of other men and women of just individual shares in the products of their own labor, then these hundreds of thousands of people have aught against them. If they are acquiring their bread and wine out of an international economic system of so-called free competition which, on scientific analysis, can be proved to lead inevitably to international wars intrinsically uncontrollable by any kind of peace machinery whatever—the only alternatives being war or radical change to an economic socialism—then millions of

young men now dead or dying on battle fields have aught against them.<sup>78</sup>

#### THE POSSESSION OF A MATERIAL BASIS FOR RATIONAL SOCIAL PLANNING ALSO A MODERN PHENOMENON

In addition to the fact that we have gained such scientific understanding of the unchristian disorders within the constitutional structure of our present Western economic system that we are able intelligently to set about seeking a remedy in socialist economic change, we have another reason which compels Christians to act for such change within their environmental world. This reason is found in the fact that our modern scientific techniques of production of the material needs of men have become so abundantly advanced that the required economic reorganization has become a practical, as well as a theoretically desirable, aim.

Both of these factors in our present world situation are of recent development. For even if our ancestors had understood the nature of their problem and of its solution, they would have been prevented in any case from working for it practically because of the meagre and primitive character of their material techniques.<sup>79</sup> But they did not so

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<sup>78</sup> The greatest pioneer in the field of demonstrating that our capitalist economic system, as it has now developed, is constitutionally (not merely accidentally) unjust, and that it not only can, but must be radically reorganized on a socialist basis, is undoubtedly Karl Marx. He has been followed by worthy successors, such as Lenin and Stalin, in both the fields of economic theory and of revolutionary practice. It is the present simple duty of Christians to gain a broad familiarity with the basic principles of Marxian economic and social theory.

This does not mean that Christians are to embrace Materialism as a philosophy. But it does mean that they should understand what Marxian theorists call the dialectic nature of the process of human history. And understanding this, they should become able to cooperate intelligently and selectively with whatever secular revolutionary forces of our own day are gaining the power necessary to bring about the economic changes now categorically required if natural bread and wine are to become better available for the Christian Offertory.

<sup>79</sup> In this connection it is interesting to recall that the Church, at the end of the feudal period and at the beginning of our present bourgeois capitalist era, tried to inhibit the growing economic prac-

understand these things. From the beginning of the Christian movement even down to the nineteenth century it is not too much to say that nobody understood that men's economic and political systems might be changed by rationally directed planning. Christians have shared the general human attitude in this respect. They may have realized, more or less vaguely, that secular society has been preponderantly organized on a basis such as to enshrine relationships of injustice and oppression within its very fabric, but they seem never to have realized that they could effect a radical improvement through deliberately organized effort. Until recently men have tended to accept the economic and political systems into which they were born as having the nature of given, or even of eternal things. All they ever thought they could then do was to make the best of the evils

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tice of taking interest on monies loaned. Since taking interest on loaned capital is the very life-blood of the capitalist system, the Church by forbidding interest was really condemning this new economic structure while it was as yet in its infancy. However, because of the actual human and material situation at that time, it would not have been possible to establish a socialist economy, even if in principle this had been understood. The Church was therefore faced with only two possible choices. She could have remained adamant in setting her face against the development of the capitalist system by continuing to refuse Absolution to anyone who received interest on loans. In this case she would undoubtedly have dwindled in size to a mere remnant, awaiting further secular developments while almost completely isolated from the world around her. Or she could have got around the difficulty by casuistic discovery of certain kinds of loans (i.e. capitalist investments!) upon which she permitted a paid interest rate. She could have thus come to terms with the secular world.

She chose the latter course and retained intact her membership, her wealth, her power and her worldly prestige. It is not unprofitable to ponder on her conceivable position had she chosen the other course. She would at least have kept her witness against the injustice of material exploitation of one class of human beings by another class on a basis of property ownership. She might have survived, humanly speaking, only with great difficulty. But at least it would seem that she would be in a vastly better position at the present time; for she could now proclaim that socialism represented the kind of economic principles for which she had been contending all along. As it is, her situation is almost the complete reverse of this.

around them. It follows from this belief that the only disorders which Christians had it in their power to correct when they remembered that their brothers had aught against them, were disorders in the relatively restricted fields of their own personal and voluntary behavior towards their fellow men. These disorders they could—and often did—remedy before invoking the re-creative power of Our Lord's Atonement upon them. But the deeper and more widely involving disorders of the social system in which they lived and worked, either were not understood, and therefore were not realized at all, or they were considered eternally fixed and beyond all radical human attack. Hence social and economic disorders enshrined organizationally in the current economic system have come by long habit and custom to be brought forward at the Offertory under the cloak of the Atonement, without so much as a single prior effort to reconcile them. All excuse for the persistence of this kind of neglect is abolished by an increase in the scientific understanding of the social process and by the modern advance in production techniques. For in addition to the requisite knowledge, we now have the requisite material techniques for reorganizing our economic order upon a basis not of competition, but of cooperative production for a just social distribution fitted to acknowledged human needs. Therefore, this immediate Christian economic objective not only ought to replace the non-Christian individualism of our present competitive system, but it can be brought about. Indeed it must be brought about if we are not to revert completely to pagan barbarism.<sup>80</sup>

#### PRESENT MEANING OF RECONCILIATION WITH OUR BROTHER

For all these reasons Our Lord's blunt warning, first to be reconciled with thy brother, takes on a wider, a deeper,

<sup>80</sup> Because the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics has been the first great national unit to take this economically forward step, it is to recent Russian economic organizational experience that discerning Christians ought to look. This will without doubt prove to be the most hopeful guide in our quest for a solution of the capitalist dilemma on which the western political Democracies are now impaled.

a more portentous significance than in any previous period of Christian history. For it now enjoins not merely the righting of individual wrongs, the reconciling of individual quarrels among baptized members of Our Lord's social humanity. It enjoins not merely the confession and absolution of actual sins *within* the Divine Community. It also demands as well a carefully planned, progressively spreading, scientifically guided attack upon all *environing* economic and political systems which constitutionally enshrine disorders in such wise that these can be corrected only by radical reorganization of the systems themselves.<sup>81</sup>

Furthermore, Our Lord's injunction has a future, as well as a past reference. For example, even in the case of the simple personal illustration in which He set forth the general principle of His teaching, it might well prove impossible on some occasion for a member of the Incarnational group even to locate that particular brother who is remembered as being in need of reconciliation. Every effort might have been made to comply with Our Lord's condition, but it might still be impossible to fulfil it. Does this mean that the offered bread and wine—the gift—must be left at the Altar for an indefinite period before Our Lord's Memorial may be completed? Unmitigated enforcement of such a rule would, as we have now seen, entail this kind of postponement.

The way out of this apparent dilemma is found in a resolve for the future. If the required reconciliation is gen-

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<sup>81</sup> This truth seems to be acknowledged by the Bishops of the Episcopal Church in their Triennial Pastoral Letter of 1943. They speak of corporate sins. These are said to be "concentration of wealth in a few hands," "class distinctions that are anything but brotherly," "racial discriminations that are anything but just," "social injustices that we have tolerated until they now return to plague us with an ugly breed of antagonisms and tensions that tend to disrupt rather than to unify our economic structure and our body politic."

This is a fairly mild statement. Although it will not be news to Marxists, it represents nevertheless an advance in ecclesiastical thinking in that sins which are not merely personal and individual are recognized as facts of concrete experience. Corporate sins would better be called constitutional (or structural) social sins. We must

uinely impossible, Our Lord's Atonement must of course be invoked upon the past. His re-creative response will then come and the humanly unresolved disorder will be received from the category of a *sin* into the category of a *contingency* within the structures of the offered bread and wine, provided: firstly, that a full effort really have been made to reconcile the disorder in question, and that this effort have failed through circumstances genuinely beyond the control of the individuals involved; and secondly, that the disorder thus unavoidably unreconciled be brought forward to Our Lord for His Atonement accompanied by an unreserved resolve to work for its correction whenever future opportunity may offer. Under such conditions Our Lord can receive a disordered past into a perfected present in Himself, that this may then be in turn the basis for an efficient and powerful working towards a more nearly redeemed future. The Christian Offertory may then be brought forward. Our Lord's Memorial may be completed.

Thanks to the labors of certain secular economic scientists,<sup>82</sup> the wide social extension of the concept of reconciliation with a brother is now beginning to dawn even upon the consciousness of the organized Church. And this consciousness gives to the resolve for the future part of Our

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speak of these evils in a way which leaves no room for doubt that they cannot be eliminated by mere moral reform, corporate or other. There must be radical, scientifically guided, reconstruction of the social constitution.

The Bishops ought to remember that in general they speak to people who are largely uninstructed in scientific social analysis. Therefore, they ought to make it indubitable to everyone that what the concept of moral reform conveys to most people will not by itself suffice to solve the problem of what they call "corporate sins." We do need moral analysis from the Bishops. But we also need scientific analysis of the actual social and economic situation. And we also need both moral exhortation and scientific guidance for practical action in the future. Considering the audience which will be reached by the Bishops' words, their task is left very incomplete.

<sup>82</sup> It was Karl Marx who in 1845 first wrote in his *Theses on Feuerbach*: "The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point however is to change it." Unfortunately, the same observation can be truthfully made about most Christian theologians.

Lord's condition a reference which seems genuinely a new thing in Christian history. For, as we have now seen, relatively few of the elements within the historical structures of the average Christian Offertory have as yet been brought within the redeemed order of Our Lord's social humanity. Relatively few of them are immediately open even to partial reform or to ameliorating secular influence from Christians as they go about their necessary businesses within their environing world. Our Lord's Atonement has to be invoked to cover a really vast number of inaccessible disorders that these may be reconciled as contingencies in the offered bread and wine. But to ask Our Lord to receive such disordered gifts without a very far-reaching resolution to work in the future towards the remedy of the environing evils which have vitiated their sources would be, as it were, to overwork the Atonement. It would be a form of tempting God. Therefore, at the time of every Offertory, every member of a group of Our Lord's social humanity must resolve to go forth from that Memorial to attack those economic and political systems of the surrounding world which enshrine the disorders which have hitherto damaged the perfection of all obtainable natural bread and wine. Only thus can the grave danger of tempting God be avoided. Only thus can the members of the Divine Community avoid the terrible danger of eating and drinking damnation to themselves.<sup>83</sup>

In the light of present day scientific knowledge and techniques, we can therefore see how vast must be the compelling purport of this Christian resolution in connection with the first group of contingencies in the Offertory. It means going forth from the Divine Community with intelligent and organized effort to reconstruct the environing and fallen world. If this world will not immediately respond fully, will not as yet be converted to the point of entering the Incarnational world,<sup>84</sup> it may at least be improved. For it may be so progressively reorganized even upon its secular basis that the contingencies within the structure

<sup>83</sup> I. Cor. 11:27-30.

<sup>84</sup> Matt. 18:3.

of the Christian bread and wine may be greatly diminished. The resolution required for the conversion of defects into contingencies within the Offertory in this connection is therefore one for a mission like that of John the Baptist. It is a resolution to go forth as messengers to prepare the way of the Lord, to make His paths straight; that every valley may be filled and every mountain and hill be brought low; and the crooked made straight and the rough ways smooth, against that still more distant future when all flesh shall see the salvation of God.<sup>85</sup>

The carrying through of such a resolution will need much careful analysis, much gathering of relevant information, much intellectual work, much practical effort, much prayer and much divine grace. But, as the resolution is made, there must be present one particular moral element, and without this the resolution is invalidated. There must be a clear intention to go forward with those practical actions which the resolution may involve *without being deterred by any considerations of personal comfort, security or, if one is called upon for an extreme sacrifice, even by fears for life itself.* To reperfect God's fallen world involves a genuine battle. Our Lord said: Think not that I came to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I came to set a man against his father(i.e. if the father resist the encroachments of the Kingdom of God) and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law: and a man's foes shall be they of his own household. If any man come unto me and hateth not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also (i.e. consider all these as of less importance than Our Lord's work) he cannot be my disciple.<sup>86</sup> It is these extreme conditions which Christians must be ready to face in their proposed battles to eliminate the disorders which an evil world still intrudes into their gifts to Our Lord. In other words, Christians must seek first God's justice in human relationships, and only after that (and as a result of its achievement) can

<sup>85</sup> Luke 3:46; cited from Isaiah 40:3-5.

<sup>86</sup> Matt. 10:34-36; Luke 14:26.

either material benefits in this life or uninterrupted happy human relationships be accepted complacently as elements within the pattern of their Offertory. Until that time arrives the Christian resolution which enables Our Lord to apply the power of His Atonement to their Offertory will inevitably lead them into painful conflicts with the established disorders of their unredeemed social environment and with all those persons who uphold them. Yet it is only by this kind of resolution that Our Lord's condition of "reconciliation" may be met with regard to involuntary and non-personal disorders which now find their way into the structure of the Christian bread and wine.

#### CONTINGENCIES OF THE SECOND GROUP

We come now to those contingencies which we have said are in a sense reducible, but whose reduction may not be made a primary aim of militant Christians within this world. Here we may place those which emerge inevitably from the struggles required as a condition for the invocation of the Atonement upon the first group. These stem from the wounds received by baptized members of the Incarnation in their active battles with an evil world while they attack its disorders and try to redeem them. Such contingencies are illustrated by the Crown of Thorns, the Scourging and the Cross. They enter the Offertory under the forms of experienced persecution and defamation, the pains of weariness and frustration in the face of the world's indifference to Our Lord's own anguished cry for help in His work. They are the fruits of disillusion, of the experience of betrayal, of isolation and the burdening sense of the vast corruption of the human content of even that very Body of Christ in and through which the faithful members now try to bring forward their Offertory.

Contingencies of this group are received by Our Lord in His Offertory as in some sense normal—or at any rate expected—elements of its content. They can be received without other conditions within the Act of Consecration, through the transit of the Cross, into those absolute perfections which correspond to them in Our Lord's ascended and eternal life.

As the redeeming work of the Incarnation spreads further and also deepens towards a fuller restoration of God's creation to the order of His will, contingencies of this group may also lessen both in number and in intensity; for in a world completely redeemed upon the natural level of this life, this type of contingency would cease to emerge within the Offertory altogether. If the battle with the world had been largely won, the wounds of that battle would no longer so grievously appear. It may therefore be held that this group of contingencies, in this respect like the first group, also belongs to the category of the reducible. But a distinction must here be made. It is the very aim of the Christian Community to reduce those contingencies which stem from the disorders of the unredeemed environment. This is to be done by attacking the corresponding environmental evils which give rise to them. On the other hand, it is certainly no primary part of the Christian aim to reduce the contingencies of weariness and pain which come from the wounds of the Incarnational battle itself. Such an aim would be a seeking of human comfort, rather than the furthering of Our Lord's Kingdom. It would signify an evil type of extricationism or a self-regarding appeasement of evil. Therefore if these latter contingencies tend to diminish with the passage of time and because of the spread of Our Lord's redeeming work, this happy fact should be accepted thankfully as a kind of grace or boon from Him. And among the members of every Incarnational cell, if contingencies of this group be temporarily diminished, there must remain the willingness to face them anew, to take up the Cross again, whenever the battle thickens and again becomes more fierce.

#### CONTINGENCIES OF THE THIRD GROUP

Finally there remain those peculiar contingencies which, so far as we may judge, seem ineradicable so long as the redemption process moves within this world. They will always be found within the first stage of human redemption. These stem from such evils as the innocent sufferings of various individuals. They arise too from scientifically

unpreventable illnesses of various kinds and from accidents which can also inflict injuries upon the personally innocent. However, certain kinds of illnesses and certain kinds of industrial accidents should, on the other hand, be put in our first category; for they can result from social disorders which are entirely remediable through human action, from indifference to the material conditions of human life, from callous disregard of one social class for another which it exploits economically and from whose oppression financial profit is derived. In such cases illness and accidental suffering are largely remediable and, like all the other contingencies of our first group, their causes have to be attacked by Christians who find them contributing their corresponding contingencies to the Offertory. But it would seem that there will almost certainly remain an irremediable residuum of illness and accident so long as human life and human activity continue. And these are contingencies which, although irremediable, may nevertheless be united with the central and redeeming sufferings of Our Lord Himself as He takes them with Him in the transit of the Cross into the level of His absolute perfection.

As the most unyielding element among all the contingencies of this third group there remains the ineradicable-seeming fact of human death. There remains too, if we look sufficiently far into the future of our cooling solar system, the almost certainly predictable final extinction of the human race. This defeating contingency of human death can be redeemed within the Christian Offertory only as it is received at its Consecration into the level of the eternal life of our risen Lord. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through Our Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> I Cor. 15:26, 57.

## IX

### Character of the Secular Order Now Demanded By the Liturgy

#### • NO ANSWER IN CHRISTIAN DOGMA: A PROBLEM FOR ENLIGHTENED HUMAN REASON

WHEN WE SEEK the kind of secular order which will at this moment of history best advance the Christian reconciliation; and when we seek the methods whereby the required radical changes in our economic and political social structures shall be carried through, we transgress the proper boundaries of dogmatic truth and we enter the fields of Christian intellectual analysis and of practical planning for action.

To explore these intellectual and practical fields would carry us beyond the limits of our present liturgical discussion. We can, however, canvass a few guiding principles for Christian consideration of the problems which are bound to arise at this point; and we can at least tabulate a few practical suggestions.

First of all, when any group of Sacramental Christians assembles together to take common counsel concerning the secular problems which confront it, no matter how few in number they may be on any particular occasion, we shall almost certainly find initial divergencies of opinion. As a matter of experience, these divergencies can sometimes be very sharp and very intractable. Therefore, at the outset we should be clear about one truth. This kind of divergency within the Christian group does not indicate that in the particular historical situation in which we now live there actually exist a correspondingly large variety of possible economic analyses of the disorders of the secular world which have equal merit. Neither does it indicate that there are also available a large number of possible practical eco-

nomic and political solutions of the secular evils which beset us, any one of which might be expected to work out satisfactorily. Our appraisal of the evil character of our economic system cannot rest on individual preference for one or another theory describing its structure. It must be a matter of discovering the scientific truth. And our choice of one or another plan of practical action cannot be a mere matter of personal taste. It must rest upon a decision as to which one of many suggested plans is the one scientifically possible.

It is becoming increasingly clear to thoughtful people that the only economic choice which lies open to the secular world is that between a thoroughgoing socialist reorganization of our industrial and financial structure, and a violent, universally spreading reaction which will enthronize the inherent contradictions and injustices of our critically developed capitalist system by force, to the utter enslavement of the vast masses of the common people of the whole world. This, of course, has been the contention of Marxian economists for a hundred years now past, and its truth seems abundantly borne out by the events of recent history. For few people are now left who doubt that fascism is anything but the logical development of an historically outgrown capitalism enthroned by force.

It is becoming increasingly clear that the recent world war was a climactic stage in a struggle on the part of the unpropertied working masses to liberate themselves from that control over their spiritual and material lives which in the present economic system the ownership of capital wealth has come to place in the hands of a relatively small possessing class.

For this war, although carried forward under the superficial guise of an "old fashioned" purely international war between supposedly homogeneous national units, has in reality developed into a struggle between two classes of people—those who own the world's capital wealth, and those whose only possession is their power to labor,—a power which must be sold at the best obtainable price to their capitalist masters. And this deeper struggle is by no means

neatly international. It has instead developed into an industrial class struggle within all the remaining capitalist nations.

Furthermore, if what we call a democratic corporate life be defined in basic terms of the right of all people to have an authoritative share, a genuinely controlling and rational participation, in the management and direction of their own economic and political lives, it is becoming increasingly clear that the mere political vote within a capitalist economy is failing to distribute this directive power in a just manner to all people in proportion to their potential abilities to wield it. At the same time, in capitalist countries, the zealous defense of the fiction that political votes alone can still suffice to provide a genuinely democratic life for all, creates a popularly felt contradiction between the average wage worker's actual experience of the undemocratic power of capital ownership and the carefully guarded myth that such ownership has no such popularly irresponsible power. The great majority of common people do not as yet understand the nature of this contradiction. They merely feel its reality. But at the same time they are taught not to acknowledge it openly, even to themselves, lest they be classed as something less than good citizens. The result of this is an irrational attitude on the part of the common people towards the real problems of their present unsatisfactory corporate life. This is a grossly unchristian state of affairs, because the highest natural function of man is the proper exercise of his unclouded human reason. Bread and wine drawn from an irrational environment are seriously deficient.

And if democratic material justice be defined as a distribution of those necessities and amenities of life which modern scientific techniques could make available in vast abundance to all people according to the fullness of their genuine needs and according to their intelligent abilities to make constructive use of them, it is becoming increasingly clear that the wage system of industrial production, even with the intervention of the power of organized labor unions, is failing, by the very nature of its constitution, to give us democratic material justice.

Nothing short of an invasion of the economic field by those democratic principles of control which have long been our western heritage in the political field alone will solve these pressing problems. And clearly this will not be possible without the elimination of that other anti-democratic principle of oligarchic control, concentrated in the hands of a small owning class, which now reigns in our present economic system. The power of economic, as well as of political, control over all social life must be taken from the hands of the few and placed in the hands of all the people jointly. Economic power is now obviously associated with the ownership of capital wealth—the means of production and the sources of raw materials. In order to achieve the democratization of this power—a power which in the modern world has outstripped and overmatched all democratic political controls—it is necessary to remove the ownership of capital wealth from private hands and place it in the hands of all the people corporately. This means moving forward both economically and politically to a thoroughgoing socialist organization of our productive industrial system.

These are some of the startling but central problems upon whose proper solution all Sacramental Christian groups are now compelled to seek agreement, both in diagnostic analysis and in choice of the possible means and immediate ends available for corresponding practical action. They must seek this kind of agreement because they are Christians, and they therefore have a clear concept of the kinds of environmental social relationships required by a true human nature as redeemed within Our Lord's social humanity, while at the same time they see how these required relationships are denied by our present social situation. They must seek this agreement because their central activities are Sacramental, and they therefore have need of reconciling those disorders which our present secular world intrudes, whether they will it or not, into the offered structures of their bread and wine. They must seek this agreement and they must act upon it, because as Sacramental Christians they have a healthy fear of complacently presuming upon the atoning power of their Lord.

## POSSIBILITY AND MEANS OF AGREEMENT AMONG CHRISTIANS UPON SECULAR PROBLEMS

This kind of agreement can be achieved in large outline among Sacramental Christians. If there be those who say that this is not so, they have not fully grasped the essential character of the New World of the Incarnation of which they are engrafted citizens. For this New World is given to us not merely to guarantee a dogmatic truth upon which alone agreement is to be expected. *It is also given us so that we can become the kind of people who can come to intellectual agreement upon the practical applications of general dogmatic truth to the current secular problems presented to us by our environing secular world.*

This makes it highly important that all such practical questions be discussed within the social circle of the Sacramental group. The celebration of Our Lord's Memorial ought habitually to be followed by a group social gathering, preferably a gathering for a common meal such as was customary in the early Church and was known as the *Agape*. Here let the future plans for practical action, plans which are to be applied to the further reconciliation of the bread and wine for future Memorials, be thrashed out.

Radical disagreements may indeed arise within such meetings. But the causes will almost certainly be ignorance, both theoretical and informational, on the part of many members. All members therefore have the duty of informing themselves in large outline concerning the basic nature of those secular disorders which we have just briefly canvassed. Certainly every modern Catholic should be informed concerning the Marxian method of economic diagnosis and the Marxian theories of economic change which will lead to a future socialized secular order. For it is upon a basis of Marxian analysis that the most potent organized forces which are now making for radical change in the capitalist economic system are basing their interpretations and strategies. And amidst all the welter of complicated and martial events, and of official utterances swirling around us, Catholics ought to be sufficiently educated that they

may look deep beneath the surface of mere social phenomena to discover the integrated trends and developments of that vast revolution which is the essential moving reality within the historical cataclysm now upon us.

Ignorance, unfortunately, will not be the only cause for difficulty in obtaining this kind of common agreement. For emotional attitudes and fears, moral weakness and timidity often amounting to panic in the presence of the dangerous necessities which confront us, may well cause tension and variance even among Christians who have reached a common dogmatic ground and who are unanimous in their economic diagnoses. In such cases other searching questions must be put to each and every individual: "As what kind of social being are you yourself approaching these commonly confronted problems? Are you here at this council of the Sacramental group primarily as a new-made man, a man re-created within Our Lord's social humanity? Are you thus made free from secular economic class prejudices and fears, made free by complete devotion solely to Our Lord's (and our own) common cause? Or are you here as one largely conditioned in your instinctive reactions to practical problems as, let us say, a secular banker? As a secular university professor or a conventional college student? As primarily a secular political party member? Or as a business man? As primarily one of the secular working class? As a person of property, of independent means and dilettante leisure?—In short, as in large measure an unconverted citizen of that very environing fallen world against whose deep structural disorders we as members of a new Incarnational World are now met to plan a radical attack?"

Unless Christians be emotionally detached from an unconverted devotion to present secular disorders—both material and cultural—through a fully realized citizenship within Our Lord's social humanity, they are bound to take fright at the practical demands of their professed religion. For often they will find themselves engaged in actions which threaten the present sources of their material welfare. And when they have succeeded in making material things a lesser worry, they will realize that they are also out to de-

stroy many cultural and psychological values which, in the non-Christian capitalist world, are regarded as very precious and the true stigmata of the good life. They will find themselves becoming culturally separated from many friends, and perhaps from their own families.

We must recall Our Lord's injunction to take no thought of these things. We are to take no thought, saying "What shall we eat?" or "What shall we drink?" or "Where-withal shall we be clothed?" We are to take no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for itself. It is in the reaches of practical Christian action that this injunction finds a startling application, because it fits so well the situation in which every Christian group will certainly find itself when it considers practical application of its Faith. For if we do seek first the Kingdom of God and His justice, most Christians today will find themselves methodically engaged in sawing off, as it were, that branch upon which, as citizens of a fallen world, they now rather comfortably sit. It is only after the Christian revolution that all those things we now relinquish may once more, as Our Lord said, be added unto us.<sup>88</sup>

Therefore, these searching material and psychological questions must be asked fearlessly within every Christian group. And if the frank answers are often disappointing, we must work by Our Lord's grace to recondition ourselves as full citizens of His New World. For one of the chief reasons why He has provided this new divinely constituted environment within His Incarnation is that we may be thus reconditioned, intellectually, emotionally, and materially within it, according to His will. And as we grow into complete, rather than partial, Christians, we shall find that basic agreements about our practical problems are not too difficult to obtain. To this end let every Christian group seek to become united intellectually and practically, as well as mystically and Sacramentally. By the grace of God it is possible to achieve an adequate unity in practical analysis and planning for an organized Christian attack upon the secular disorders of our time.

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<sup>88</sup> Matt. 6:24-38.

## SOME PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Once an agreement has been reached about the necessity of either espousing or opposing some immediate political or economic situation or trend, the Incarnational group will probably become aware that as a Christian unit it possesses relatively little influence and but little social power within its secular environment!

For one thing, any such group which begins to take its social vocation seriously will for the present be small in numbers, because conventional and "spiritual" Christians, by and large, will desert it. And because of this consequent numerical weakness it will be found impracticable to base any political or economic mass movement—the only kind of movement which can have real power to gain its social objectives—upon the dogmatic and Sacramental basis which characterizes the group itself.

Another difficulty in the way of strengthening corporate Incarnational social action at this time is an external one. It will be found that the secular world has long since ceased to look to the Incarnation for organized leadership in furthering those secular changes on the subject of whose principles it is so very used to hearing nominal Christians talk. The notion that the New World of Our Lord's social humanity necessarily has its own corporately held theory about the way the secular world must be organized, as well as its own plans for accomplishing the changes required, will be news to most modern people, news even to the majority of conventionally trained "Christians." For so universal is the opinion that Christianity is a matter of individual piety only that it is resentfully believed that Christians transgress their prerogatives if they enter the political or economic fields on a dogmatic Christian basis.

In this connection it is sometimes amusing to find that when Christians do make this kind of venture openly, even as individuals, they are immediately met with a kind of religious analogue of that query so often put to radical secular organizers. "Good" Americans say to their fellow citizens of this latter type: "If you don't like this country, why don't you go back to where you came from?"—mean-

ing, no doubt, to Soviet Russia. And Christian leaders who wish to act socially to gain Our Lord's ends are told: "If you are going to interfere with secular economic and political systems, why don't you go back to moral exhorting?"—which is merely an oblique way of saying: "Why don't you go back to where *you* came from, i.e. to the conventional church pulpit?"<sup>89</sup>

Sacramental Christians must therefore confront this environmental situation realistically. Since they cannot now expect to establish anything even approaching a mass movement, either political or economic, upon their own basis of analysis, or upon the basis of those actions and objections which are peculiar to Christianity, they must look about themselves in the secular world to discover what mass movements are available on some other basis, but whose immediate trends can be seen as moving in the Christian direction. Because from among the many social forces which now begin to claim a share in shaping the immediate future of human history, some may be seen to be heading in an anti-Christian direction and some in a more Christian one. The immediate fruits of the success of fascist forces, for example, are to worsen the disorders already now resident within the secular sources of bread and wine. Sacramental Christians have therefore a duty to work with anti-fascist political and economic movements.

Among the organized economic movements which hold

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<sup>89</sup> A rigorous distinction must be drawn between organized Incarnational work for changing the world's present social structure to one in which love and brotherhood may be practised by serious Christians, and that *political interference* on the part of the conventional church organization to which we are all too accustomed. The spectacle usually presented by what is called the "church in politics" is thoroughly deplorable. The reason for this is that the organized church on the whole is not interested in redeeming God's world, except in the sense of "saving" individual souls. Therefore, her political activity is usually the very opposite of Incarnational. It is usually concerned with preserving her special rights and privileges, above all her wealth, on whatever terms the organized secular world will best facilitate her—witness the Vatican Concordats with fascist powers. Hence this kind of "church" is usually concerned with the social *status quo* and even with out and out reaction, because

desirable potentialities for Christians are those of organized labor, because labor organizations, whatever their very human corruptions and disunities, can be seen objectively as forces tending towards a greater economic justice within our present capitalist system. They are also potential bulwarks of popular democratic authority within some future radical change of this system in the direction of a socialist reorganization of the economic order.

The progressive economic advantages of the wage-earning class of people lie in the direction of socialist change. The great organized power of this class, when directed to take action for its own material advantage is at the same time taking concurrent steps toward radical reconstitution of society upon this kind of cooperative basis. Therefore, this class moves historically, even when it does not consciously recognize the fact, in a Christian direction. That labor organizations are often motivated by considerations of immediate "self-interest" does not vitiate the objective fact that this same self-interest fortunately corresponds to a step in the direction of socialism. This is why members of Christian Sacramental groups ought to fight on the side of secular labor organizations, and not be put off at this time by their supposed selfishness or by their present corruptions. These latter vices are not peculiar to wage-workers. They are found even more firmly entrenched among the forces of sec-

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her wealth and privileges are rooted in the disorders of an unredeemed world. It too often follows that the official church tries to defend the evil structure of her secular environment.

This is a result of the church's perversion of Christianity which argues that nothing can be done about this world in any case. The main duty of the church is then to conserve her wealth, her power and her size, the better to get more souls out of the world into "heaven." This is just another aspect of radical extricationism. By means of this perversion the official church often finds it quite possible to serve both God and mammon at once.

But proper Incarnational social action would attack evil secular disorders even though the members of Our Lord's social humanity, individually and corporately, will certainly then be in danger of losing their wealth, their numerical strength and perhaps their lives. Their individual souls will be saved as a kind of by-product of this enormous venture on behalf of Our Lord.

ular reaction. Christians must make their choice of allegiance in this situation. Let it be that of the interests of labor, because in the hands of labor rests the future welfare of the vast majority of mankind. At this present moment the workers may not be sought for in public counsel; not sit in the judges' seat; they may not declare justice and judgment; and they may not be found where men speak indirectly in complicated analogies. Yet without these cannot a city be inhabited, nor can men either dwell or go up and down in their towns. It is the workers who will maintain the fabric of the world.<sup>90</sup>

Among the corresponding political movements of our time, Christians should select without fear the secular political groupings of the left. For, as the late Archbishop of Canterbury has pointed out, the extreme left of the Communists has social objectives which are basically Christian in their constitution.<sup>91</sup> They are those of a vastly greater economic justice than we now possess in the capitalist democracies of the west. Potentially they allow for a more deeply penetrating and equably distributed democratic control. Very recently even official gatherings of the Eastern Orthodox and of the Anglican Churches have been moved to imply this admission.<sup>92</sup>

There are other less deeply moving, but relatively powerful, secular organizations within which certain Christians may be able to work more effectively than within either labor or leftist political circles. Among these may be mentioned such an organization as the American Civil Liberties Union. There are also many temporarily organized groups which work for special immediate objectives. Such are

<sup>90</sup> Eccl. 38:32-34.

<sup>91</sup> In a public pronouncement on this subject made in the summer of 1941, the Archbishop, at that time still occupying the Archeepiscopal See of York, said: "Personally, I always thought Bolshevism preferable to Naziism, because its goal of universal fellowship is part of the Christian hope . . . ; the goal of Naziism is itself flatly unchristian."—Reported in the *Living Church*, August 20, 1941, p. 5. The Archbishop's remarks were also widely quoted in the secular press.

<sup>92</sup> Cf. The Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of the Episcopal Church, October, 1943.

those which work for the abolition of the poll tax which inhibits a full political democracy in certain states; organizations which work for low cost housing for working people and others of lower or uncertain income; societies formed for combating race prejudices and race discriminations in the American scene; certain emergency committees constituted from time to time to defend unpopular minority groups or individuals against particular reactionary threats against their rights, their liberties or even their lives; groups which are now forming to help in establishing a genuinely democratic peace following this war and which are trying to encourage the vast masses of the common people of the world in their own movements towards establishing themselves on a democratic basis, both politically and economically, while at the same time they try to unveil and destroy the semi-fascist forces of finance and business in all countries which fear, and therefore detest, such popular movements. And before very long it is almost certain that the postwar social problems of unemployment and reconstruction will also open to Christians the opportunity of "putting in their oars."

Whenever it is a practical possibility, in addition to sending forth members as individuals to cooperate in selected environmental movements, every Sacramental group should try to have part in some kind of social movement as a single unit in its own corporate right. Opportunities for this kind of work may well be found only locally and then only from time to time. But they should be exploited fully. For example, the group might find it possible to assist a local labor union in winning a strike for more just wages and better living conditions. It might do this by appearing corporately on picket lines, by regularly supplying hot coffee and sandwiches for other picketers, by organizing systematic visiting and relief work among the families of strikers, if this were needed. The group might be able even to offer its own place of meeting, or obtain some other suitable room, to be used as an organizational headquarters for the striking Local. Nothing can have a greater educational and practical value for a group of Sacramental Christians

than this kind of common social action corporately undertaken. It will help immeasurably to prepare the corporate Christian leadership for those more far-reaching secular opportunities to exercise it which lie ahead. And in the meantime, there will be found here a valuable, corporately contributed, constructive addition to the offered content of the group's bread and wine.

But let all Christian groups keep one basic principle very clear indeed within their own councils. They are out to eliminate those disorders in the secular sources of their bread and wine which are constitutionally enshrined in the current secular system itself. They are not primarily concerned with palliative work, while preserving the evil *status quo*. They are out to prepare the way of the Lord; and the earlier quoted passage in which St. John the Baptist issues his call for this kind of action sounds like an allegory for secular revolution rather than mere reform. Christians who understand their true social calling today are in fact genuine revolutionaries over against the corrupt secular system of this historical period. Therefore, if they participate in some immediately reformist movement, as for example that of abolishing the poll tax, let them remember that they are doing this not because their success in this will solve the basic problem, but because the association thus gained provides a good approach both for educational and organizational work among certain broad sections of their fellow citizens. These people, once so organized, may then be led farther into the real tasks of radical social change. For it is only when our constitutionally individualistic, competitive system is replaced with a constitutionally cooperative, socialist system, that the Christian objective may be viewed as on the road towards accomplishment.

In this kind of environmental work with secular forces, let no member of the Sacramental group be deterred by shrinking, purist notions. God the Holy Spirit can work universally for the furthering of His will. Fortunately indeed for all humanity, God's goodness and mercy are not bound within the strict confines of His Incarnational group. Therefore, even the fact that many of the forces making for ra-

tional socialist change in our day are at times anti-Christian does not alter the other fact that they may be in reality working for an environing social reorganization which, if achieved, will structurally improve the sources of Christian bread and wine. Our Lord Himself once remarked that of two sons of a certain man, both of whom were told to go to work in their father's vineyard, the first replied: "I go not," but nevertheless he *went*, while the second said "I go," but he *went not*. But it was the son who acted the right way, even while talking the wrong way, who really did his father's will.<sup>93</sup> Secular humanists are very often like the first son, while Catholic purists are altogether too often like the second.

#### PROBLEM OF SECULAR VIOLENCE: RELATION OF MEANS AND ENDS

And if in this kind of cooperation, Christians seem at times to be involved with certain materialist interpretations and analyses of our world which they know are ultimately deficient; or if they find themselves being drawn into situations in which violence may almost certainly emerge, let them consider the alternatives open to them. Let them consider the fact that *no* avenue of action in the unredeemed world is in any sense perfect. Christians themselves cannot so much as put one foot before the other on the pavements in front of their own homes without invoking the Atonement upon the disorders in which such a simple act must inevitably involve them. It follows that in practical secular action Christians are always forced to choose between relative evils. There are no situations whatever in the secular environment which exclude atheism, materialism and violence. Certainly our capitalist system is replete with these disorders. Its objective basis is cynically materialistic. It maintains its growingly precarious organizational structure with violence, sometimes veiled, and sometimes so open that it emerges as fascist violence. Purist Christians too often lapse into these evils of the *status quo* without so much

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<sup>93</sup> Matt. 21:28-31.

as realizing it. Let members of Our Lord's humanity recognize the difficult fact that in the world they are always beset with evils, no matter what course of action they may choose. But an association with disorders which are unavoidably incidental to a movement in the direction of a radical re-ordering of the secular sources of their bread and wine may be received as a contingency by the power of the Atonement.

In this way Our Lord's Atonement solves for the members of His social humanity the difficult problem which always arises when a relatively bad means is used to gain a good and desirable end. As we have just remarked, all means for constructive action within a fallen world are vitiated by the presence of Original Sin. A superficial and specious answer to this difficulty is sometimes given by saying that "the end justifies the means." This is simply not true. If it were, the Incarnation itself would be superfluous. No end can justify any evil whatever; for the effects of every means used to attain an end are always present within that end itself when once it is achieved. If the means are evil (as they always are within our unredeemed environment), by just so much is the perfection of the end impaired. It is Our Lord's Atonement alone which can justify the evil qualities of some particular means, once this is chosen by Christians as the best obtainable mode of action in the preparation of their bread and wine. And such unavoidable evils are justified not by a human end obtained, but by their conversion into contingencies through the power of Our Lord's Atonement working within the life-pattern of His Divine Community.

But this application of the Atonement always waits upon the courageous fulfilment of those conditions which Our Lord has Himself laid down. And surely, at this moment of history, complacent or cowardly connivance in disorders incident to secular reaction, in the maintenance of a basically undemocratic and oppressive economic order, will be rejected as sin. It is this sin, "unjustified," unatoned for, and remaining in the bread and wine of the Offertory, which, together with those who dare to bring it forward,

will certainly be cast forth into that outer darkness where there is nothing left but wailing and gnashing of teeth!<sup>94</sup>

### EVOLUTION AND REVOLUTION IN SOCIAL CHANGE

People of good will, whether humanists or Christians, quite properly shrink from violence in human relations, even in the interest of obtaining a better social order. They therefore tend to ask whether the radical social changes now in the making, no matter how desirable, cannot be guided into gradual channels, that those violences which are so often associated with sudden historical cataclysms may be avoided. In other words, most Christians would prefer, if possible, what is called an evolutionary, rather than a revolutionary social change.

If this terminology be used, it ought at any rate to be used exactly. And natural evolution as we know it never consists exclusively of a mild succession of almost imperceptible changes. It does exhibit this kind of gradualism in one of its aspects, but periods of slow change—as in the case of evolving animal organisms, for example—are always punctuated with culminating quick changes when, after long ages, earlier living forms suddenly yield to the appearance of new and highly differentiated types which seem to

<sup>94</sup> Matt. 22:13. This threat of being cast forth out of the Divine Community occurs in several other passages of the New Testament. But the reference here cited has a peculiarly relevant interest. The story is told by Our Lord of a certain king who prepared a great supper in honour of the wedding of his son. He then discovered that the affluent and socially respectable people who had been invited refused to attend. Whereupon the king sent forth his messengers to gather in men and women wherever they might be found available that the wedding might be furnished with guests.

But when the party was well under way, the host entered and found one man—supposedly directly off the street—without a wedding garment. On being questioned as to why he showed this disrespect to his host the man could make no reply nor find excuse for himself. Whereupon the king had the man ejected into outer darkness.

This parable seems to some critics very difficult to interpret. "How was it possible," they ask, "for the wretched man to have procured a wedding garment under those conditions? His ejection seems unjust."

leap out from the gradual series and thus leave an enormous gap in its even continuity. In other words, natural evolution is always characterized by long periods of slow change within which certain tensions seem to pile up which in turn cause the emergence of that sudden kind of change popularly called revolution. But in this sense revolution is itself one of the characteristic elements in every process of evolution.

The development of human history exhibits an analogous quality. Long periods of gradual social development have always been succeeded by periods of relatively sudden and rapid change in which a deeply radical, or qualitative reorganization of the whole social order has occurred. Such periods in history are usually called revolutionary; but they ought not in strict accuracy of speech to be contrasted with social evolution. Evolution is itself the broad term for the process of the development of new forms—whether these be animal, vegetable, or social organisms—and evolution therefore includes periods of slow development,—of quantitative accessions,—and moments of cataclysmic saltation,—of qualitative alterations.

An unbiased study of history gives us no reason for imagining that such a qualitative change as that of reorganizing the capitalist system into a socialist one will take place

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It is likely that this wedding garment stands precisely for Our Lord's Atonement. No member of His social humanity can ever be prepared *in his own human right* to come forward with the gift of his life within Our Lord's Memorial Feast. The covering wedding garment or festival apparel must always be bestowed by Our Lord. But whoever comes forward asking for this garment without first having expended all his own powers towards reconciliation with his brother in the world before he asks to receive it, is in the position of one who overworks the Atonement, and the necessary covering garment will not be bestowed. Such people, careless and complacent with respect to fulfilling the human condition laid upon them by Our Lord, may well be speechless when He, as Host, meets them with the question: "Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? How can you ask for the benefit of my Atonement when you yourself have not done your own necessary prior part, either in the action already open to you, or in repentance for inaction, or in resolution for further action in the future?"

gradually, by means of mild and almost imperceptible successive reformist changes, one at a time. The capitalist structure is of one piece in its entirety, and to change any essential element within its present precariously balanced mechanism is to threaten the whole. An historical moment of qualitative (revolutionary) social change seems at hand.

Furthermore, although it is in the abstract conceivable that even this revolutionary change might be guided to its proper end by rational human beings without the appearance of violence or bloodshed, history again gives us little practical comfort in this regard. As we look back upon similar periods of the past, the English bourgeois revolution beginning in the twelfth century, the American Revolution, the French Revolution, all pass in array. In recent time we have had the Russian Revolution. And in none of these qualitative social changes has there been an absence of violent conflict with powerful forces which would, if they could, have preserved the *status quo*. In the still more recent incipient Spanish revolution, violence has temporarily prevented the full qualitative change from taking place.

Therefore, our fallen world being what it is, it seems more than likely that violence and, indeed, armed class conflicts may emerge within the world's present non-socialist countries when the recent international war begins to mature its fruits in radical socialist changes inside the various contending national units. But Christians may not shrink even from participation on the progressive side of these future struggles, provided they can really assist in bringing a new socialist world to birth.

#### PRESENT SOCIAL REVOLUTION MOVING IN A CHRISTIAN DIRECTION

Let Christians rather give thanks because that secular revolution which is now possible does actually move in the direction of an order which will promote a greater Christian justice and brotherhood in its constitution. Christians, of course, welcome the approaching social change for reasons which are basically different from those which seem most

cogent to Communists and other humanists among their fellow revolutionaries. But the objective fact that a socialist revolution happens to be the one which is now historically obtainable ought to be interpreted as a clear token of God's providence granting to all of us a social boon far past our own deserving.

For, from the Christian point of view, that kind of secular revolution which is possible of attainment in any given historical situation is not necessarily in every aspect more desirable than the maintenance of the system which is to be superseded. For example, the structure of the capitalist order which succeeded the feudal structure was less, rather than more Christian in the quality of the social relationships which it imposed upon men. The feudal structure permitted certain mutual cooperative relationships among all the members of its hierarchy of a kind which were destined to be completely inhibited by the competitive structure of capitalism. Even the feudal Church dimly perceived this fact and she tried to forbid the taking of interest on monies loaned. If this effort had succeeded, a capitalist order would have been hampered to say the least.<sup>95</sup> But the Church later gave in to the seeming secularly inevitable, and ended by giving her blessing to unbridled human competition and an accompanying idealization of extreme individualism. She ought to raise a paean of thanksgiving that

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<sup>95</sup> This analysis of the nature of the bourgeois revolution is not to be interpreted as a blanket condemnation of it. At the close of the feudal period, the preponderant forces of history within the secular (non-Incarnational) world were moving towards what was later necessarily to become a capitalist organization of our industrial productive relationships. The bourgeois revolution was in this respect a progressive secular movement; for it greatly facilitated the development of our modern production methods and techniques, and it permitted that exploitation of the earth's vast natural resources which has given us the material abundance of the present age. But the fact that this kind of advance within the secular process was achieved by the adoption of a system based on those individualistic and competitive human relationships which have brought so much misery and injustice in the use to which our material development has been put—relationships which are morally incompatible with those required by

God now guides the secular order in such wise that a basic change into a cooperative economic and political system is a glorious possibility within a near future, provided men of good will are found wise enough and bold enough to follow this highly Christian path.

### CHRISTIAN OFFERTORY ROOTED IN THE WORLD'S MATERIAL ARRANGEMENTS

The logic of the Offertory thus directs the reconciling attention of every Incarnational group to the deep disorders of that system whereby the environing unredeemed world exploits its material resources, and whereby it produces and distributes its manufactured goods. For we now have sufficient social, economic and psychological knowledge to understand that if the material production relationships of human life be systematically disordered, it is both mistaken and unreal to suppose that an ethical and moral social superstructure, such as is required by the Christian reconciliation, can be erected upon a material basis whose constitutional disorders are deliberately left untouched. For the method of the Incarnation reveals to us that God's world is not to be redeemed from the top downwards—by proceeding first into the spiritual and thence into the material level of human life—but quite the other way around.

This is the reason why Christians do not go forth from their Incarnational centers as pure idealists seeking primarily the Incarnational Society—is an excellent illustration of the fallenness of the secular historical process.

In other words, we can see from this analysis of the manner in which the fallen world moves in history how a revolution which in one aspect ushers in a genuine secular progress, can at the same time cause a retrogression in human relationships when judged by the peculiar requirements of the Incarnational Society. But it appears that the socialist revolution which has now become a possibility would be an advance towards a still better world structure from both the secular and the Incarnational points of view.

Clearly this kind of broad coincidence of the secular and Christian purposes within the potentialities of one single secular revolution is not a purely human achievement. That is why God's providence may be discerned in the present world situation.

ily, by exhortation and example, to better the habitual ethical standards and moral dispositions of the people of their environment. They go forth as primarily bent upon a very practical and material quest. They work by intelligently organized political and economic action, to obtain more tolerable and increasingly fitting portions of natural bread and wine.

# X

## Material Basis of Metacosmesis

### THE MATERIAL BASIS OF SPIRITUAL RELATIONSHIPS IN THE OFFERTORY

IT IS NOT ALONE in the unredeemed environment that we can see the vital part which the material basis of human life plays in the work of man's redemption. The entire process of Metacosmesis within the Memorial of Our Lord's Body and Blood is borne along through its full cycle in a movement rooted deeply within the material level of creation.<sup>96</sup>

At the time of their Memorial, Christians, offer and present themselves, their souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice<sup>97</sup> to be accepted of God through the door of the Incarnation of His Son. But this presentation cannot be consummated merely by the repetition of words and by subjective acts of renewed self-dedication. The natural substances of bread and wine are the things which are moved to the Altar and which are thus objectively and concretely put forward to Our Lord. These are the *basic* gifts for which He waits.

In the prior individual and social work required in producing or obtaining these material things, virtues have (or have not) been exercised; intellectual and spiritual growth has (or has not) been achieved. All the spiritual structure which has thus emerged during the preparation of the ma-

<sup>96</sup> Matter is here to be defined in its basic Aristotelian sense. It is the principle of individuation within our world. Matter, in the Aristotelian usage, is not confined to the designation of sensible things. There is matter which is only intelligible. For example, the matter of a species is its genus. Cf. Hugh Tredennick, M.A., Introduction to Loeb Classical Library Edition of the *Metaphysics*, vol. I, p. xxvii.

<sup>97</sup> Canon of the Anglican Mass.

terial gifts moves to Our Lord by necessary concomitance with the substances of the bread and wine. But the spiritual structure cannot be presented in such form as effectually to transgress that wall of partition between the level of our fallen world and the level of the divine life, except it be borne up to the door of Our Lord's Altar under the forms of those material gifts wherein it has come to reside, material gifts which, by Our Lord's institution, are the basic objects demanded from the Divine Community for His Memorial. All other outgoing spiritual movements, whether of heartfelt devotion, of aspiration, of prayer, of resolution for the future, of Christian moral sanctity, are received by God Incarnate concomitantly with the material gifts of bread and wine.

#### DANGERS OF PARALLELISM IN THINKING OF SPIRITUAL AND MATERIAL THINGS

It is of paramount importance to discern the essential connection between the spiritual structure which emerges within the process of preparation of the offered bread and wine, and the concrete portions of the material offerings themselves. These material objects are the bearers of the spiritual structure in the movement of the Offertory. Without these material bearers the spiritual gifts of the Divine Community have no means of moving towards their consummation within the succeeding Consecration. To suppose otherwise is to reduce the Memorial from its position as the great central functional Act of Our Lord's social body to the position of a mere vivid piece of ritual.

If the latter view be held, the really basic process of the Memorial is a spiritual meeting between God and man, a meeting which parallels the material ritual while the bread and wine lie upon the Altar as passive reminders of the life and death of a great leader and Prophet of long ago. This Prophet then points the way, but He does not open it concretely here and now through a materially mediated door leading out of the disordered bondage of our material world. This "spiritualized" view of the function of the natural bread and wine is radically sub-Christian. For it would

leap over the historically attested necessity of a material Incarnation. It forgets that full many a great Prophet before Our Lord pointed the spiritual path to God. Yet it is precisely because it is not possible to establish a perfect union between God and man upon a "purely spiritual" basis—or even upon the basis of the deficient material sacrifices of the Old Covenant of Israel—that God's Son perfected upon Himself a Body of human flesh. Full functional union with this perfected Body must still be achieved upon a like material basis. Since the ascension, this basis is always provided by that bread and wine which bear the ever-growing content of Our Lord's social humanity into the full and absolute union with Him in His Memorial.

Therefore, we must seek to banish completely the error of thinking in terms of two processes, one a spiritual and one a material, which merely parallel each other, either within Our Lord's individual Incarnation, or within that Memorial which extends the Incarnate life to His social humanity and thus makes it functionally accessible to all other men still held in the flesh of this present world. In Our Lord the spiritual and the material are completely one. He is but One Christ made man for our salvation. For natural man to attempt some kind of short-circuited, "purely spiritual," union with God apart from Our Lord's human Body as the bridge or way of that union, is a mere futile and ignorant presumption. A perfected, functional union of fallen humanity with God has to be re-effected through His Incarnate Body. The first Offertory for this Body was of matter drawn from the individual human body of Our Lady. The continuing Offertory of the Divine Community is likewise concretely presented under the forms of the matter of its corporately prepared bread and wine.

#### THE MATERIAL BASIS OF THE CONSECRATION

At the Consecration of His people's offerings, Our Lord moves to receive them into the second stage of the redemption process, into the absolute perfection of His risen humanity. This is the movement of His Sacrifice and it too is based upon the emergence within the offered bread and

wine of the Substances of His Body and His Blood. The whole spiritual structure of the content of Our Lord's social humanity here offered is received into the wholeness of the risen and ascended Christ. But the whole Christ becomes present at the Consecration by a living—and therefore necessary—concomitance with the Substances of the individually assumed Body and Blood of His Incarnation. The absolute perfection of the people's spiritual offering is effected as this offering moves sacrificially into the fullness of Our Lord's risen and ascended life. And this too is a process which moves by concomitance with a simple basic movement deep within the material level of the Memorial. The spiritual movement from the level of man's natural state into the level of Our Lord's ascended humanity is effected by concomitance with the basic movement whereby the natural substances of the bread and wine of the Offertory are terminated in the Substances of the Body and Blood of the Consecration.<sup>98</sup> The spiritual movement of the life of man from a contingent to an absolute perfection within the Incarnate life of God is here borne along upon the movement of the natural substances of offered bread and wine into the Substances of the Incarnate Body and Blood. Thus in the Consecration as in the Offertory, a basic movement in the material level of the Incarnation is the necessary bearer of the concomitant movement within the spiritual superstructure. And apart from this material basis, the spiritual movement alone cannot of itself be carried through.

Finally, in the succeeding Holy Communion, the members of Our Lord's social humanity receive their offered Gifts now consecrated and returned to them by Him. They thus receive the ascended Christ in His wholeness. And in union with Him, they receive their own sacrifices absolutely perfected in Him in the second stage of man's redemption. They here receive both Our Lord's life and *their own lives again*, given back out of the level where they have been received into Our Lord's absolute perfection, that they may further carry forward the still remain-

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<sup>98</sup> St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, III, Q 75, Articles II and III.

ing work of His redeeming Incarnation within the level of the natural human world. But here again, the bearers of this return Gift in the Holy Communion, the Gift of Our Lord in His wholeness united with the absolutely perfected offerings of His social humanity, are the Substances of the Incarnate Body and Blood. The basic movement is still within the material level. Therefore, a mere parallelism between the spiritual and material processes of the Memorial must be excluded from our thought. These "two processes" are but two aspects of one single process. They are inseparably united. And furthermore, instead of the movement in the spiritual level being operationally the primary one, it is quite the other way around. The movement in the material level of the Memorial is the necessary bearer of the spiritual movement. In this sense the movement in the material level has the primary importance.

The relationship between the spiritual and the material aspects of the Memorial is analogous to the relationship between the field or carrier waves of a radio broadcast, and the overtone waves or short variations which are modulated upon that field. It is the short-wave modulations which enable the original sound effects to be reproduced in the radio receiving apparatus. In this context they correspond to the movement in the spiritual level of the Memorial. The field waves, being themselves invariable, have no audible effect. They correspond to the material level of the Memorial. Yet without the field or carrier waves there would be not only no sound effects, but no transmission could take place at all. In one sense the overtone modulations are the most important things in a radio broadcast, since it is by means of them that all the sound effects are reproduced. But in a deeper sense, the carrier waves are the most important, since without them there could be no broadcasting whatever.

#### METACOSMIC CYCLE BORNE UPON A MOVEMENT WITHIN THE MATERIAL LEVEL

Likewise, in the whole process of Metacosmesis, the fulfilling of the spiritual redemption of man is in one sense

the most important element, since man's highest faculties are those of the free movements of his rational soul. But in the Sacramentally operational sense, the substances of the bread and wine of the Offertory and the Substances of Our Lord's Body and Blood in the Consecration and Holy Communion, are basically the most important thing; for without the movement<sup>99</sup> of these within the material level of the Memorial, there could be no fully rounded out movement of the spiritual elements of human life within the redeeming cycle of Metacosmesis at all!

For these reasons we should not hesitate to call Our Lord's Memorial a unique apparatus provided by Him as essentially necessary to the fulfilment of the redeeming action of that portion of His social humanity which continues His Incarnate life within this world. But it is, of course, more than an apparatus; for this term is usually reserved for inanimate machines. The Memorial is a living organ of a living social body. We have already compared it to a heart. The analogy should be extended to include the whole respiratory system; for the life-blood which it pumps is revivified as it is sent on its way.

Like the organ of any living body, the operation of the Memorial is based upon a set of dynamic relationships within the material world. Like a heart it pumps the life-blood of its body. It draws the matter for its action from its body under the forms of that bread and wine which issue from the life-process of Our Lord Himself growing Incarnationally within His Community. It draws these into itself at the Offertory, as perfected but contingent things. Then, like a heart in conjunction with the respiratory system, it further perfects the matter which it receives. It is able to send forth consecrated Bread and Wine, the Substances of Our Lord's risen Body and Blood. And with this fresh surging tide there flows the whole and Very Christ,

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<sup>99</sup> The word *movement* is here used in its Aristotelian sense of *change*. The notion of successive change in spatial position is not necessarily involved. Spatial translation is only one kind of change, and does not necessarily involve substantial change (or movement) in the thing moved.

giving Himself again in Holy Communion to His social body; and with Himself that added content of His Incarnation just received from the same His social body, but now absolutely perfected in His risen life.

A living heart we might say pumps "only" material blood. It is certainly true that the circulation of material blood is the heart's basic function. Yet that necessary blood is the bearer of health and sanity and of all the creative vigor of the living body. The heart by concomitance pumps life itself. Likewise the Memorial effects a movement "only" of substances within the material level of man's life. These movements involving the substances of material things are truly the basic functions of the Memorial. Yet these substances are the bearers, not of mere human vigor, but by concomitance, of the re-creative and redeeming life of Very and Incarnate God, taking fallen men into an ordered vitality which overflows both the limitations of the natural world and the bonds of destroying time; and spreading within Our Lord's social humanity the power of an absolute perfection sent flowing back into its earthly organism out of God's eternity.

Herein lies the reason why the reperfection of the material basis of human life in and through the Divine Community assumes an importance of such primary dimensions. Herein is found the basis of the observation of the late Archbishop William Temple that "Christianity is the most avowedly materialistic of all the great religions."<sup>100</sup> For in the continuing process of the redemption of the world the substances of material bread and wine and the Substances of the Incarnate Body and Blood of God are the unique and indispensable vectors whereby all other elements in the ordered life-structure of Our Lord's Divine Community are conveyed into the level of His absolute perfection. And they are likewise the vectors whereby His re-creative power is returned to inform the further redeeming growth of that same His social humanity which presents its Offertory to Him. Such material vectors, as they take form within the natural level of human life, must therefore be made worthy of their high

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<sup>100</sup> *Nature, Man and God.* (London, 1934) p. 478.

functions. For it is through their appointed material mediums alone that a redeemed humanity in its re-created wholeness is made to partake of the eternal Godhead of its risen and ascended Lord.

### URGENCY OF THE MEMORIAL

There is therefore an urgency that the Memorial be regularly and heedfully performed. There is the gravest danger in its rejection or neglect. For only as God's fallen world is brought into the living order of Our Lord's humanity can God clothe Himself anew with His creation. Only thus can man and all his works be saved from meaningless chaos and the destroying oblivion of time. There is ultimately no other door through which man may enter into that crowning perfection of Our Lord which alone can validate and fulfil his own true nature. And this necessary humanity of the Incarnation has its very being—which is Our Lord's Being—rooted uniquely in the Memorial of His Body and His Blood. For through its operation the body of the Church draws all its sustenance; and solely by its rhythmic pulse within that body does she herself live and grow as the social organism of her Incarnate Lord.

In addition to this, it is only that which is re-created within the social humanity of Our Lord, while human life still endures, which is consummated within the absolute perfection of eternity. In Our Lord's individual case the content of that humanity which rose from the tomb and which ascended into heaven was the same content which He had perfected and matured by receiving into Himself the materials of this accomplishment from His fallen natural environment. So likewise, in the case of all those who enter into that same pattern of the humanity of the Incarnation, the fullness, the richness, the variety, the accrued values of its content which are added through their allegiance, depend upon the industry with which they, by the power of the Holy Spirit, work to fill out the redeeming accomplishments of their own re-creative lives. It is these accomplishments within the continuing humanity of Our Lord which will eventually be eternalized. The content of man's eternity—

so far as his *humanity* is concerned—is built up out of the life-materials which are available to him for this re-creative work within this world. And if this work flags, by just so much do the human values within eternity suffer the danger of being meagre and unworthy so great a boon as their consummation in Our Lord's risen life. For unless Our Lord Himself had matured His individual life within this world, there would have been no unit of humanity, even in His case, to rise from the dead! So likewise, unless His followers in the Incarnation mature their own just shares in their contribution to its growing content, they too are in danger of finding but correspondingly little share in their participation in Our Lord's consummated humanity in His Kingdom in heaven.

Hence the urgency of Our Lord's warning that He must work the works of Him who sent Him while day remained; for when the night comes, no man can work.<sup>101</sup> There is but little enough time in every human life when compared to the opportunity offered for accomplishment within the humanity of the Incarnation. This time must, as St. Paul says, be redeemed.<sup>102</sup> The content of every Offertory must be filled in for Our Lord's Memorial with all available redeemed values, with all available re-created accomplishments, before the night of death fall and it is then too late. For those elements of a fallen world which are potentially available, but which are not brought within the redeeming ambit of Our Lord's Memorial, may well be lost to all eternity.

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<sup>101</sup> John 9:4.

<sup>102</sup> Eph. 5:16; Col. 4:5.

## XI

# Characteristics of a Sacramental Metacosmic Humanity

### THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH

IT REMAINS ONLY to suggest some of the marks or signs which we might reasonably expect to find characterizing a group or cell of Our Lord's social humanity, the redeeming fruits of whose life continually undergo the process of Sacramental Metacosmisis.

The humanity of such a group is literally the humanity of the Man Jesus socially extended. And although this social extension is not joined im-mediatly to the divine nature, nevertheless, in the Memorial of Our Lord's Body and Blood, that same process of Metacosmisis is mediately opened to it which was initiated im-mediatly in the union of the two natures in Our Lord's individual case. Therefore, we might expect to find in it certain peculiar characteristics entirely analogous to those discoverable in the individual humanity of Our Lord Himself.

As a matter of record, this seems to have been the case with the Apostolic and sub-Apostolic Church. So far as we can judge, the early Church in the first centuries after Pentecost continued to exhibit the marks of Metacosmisis with singular clarity and consistency. Some of these have already been suggested at an earlier point. She had an organic sense of corporate vocational purpose far beyond that conceivable in any merely human society. She had a sense of being the continuing organism of the Incarnate Lord. She had such sureness and courage and such zeal for the spread of a new and divine life among men as the world had never before seen. She was gifted with extraordinarily new and deep insights into the meanings of Our Lord's teachings and, above all, of His life and work as the initiator

and continuer of her corporate being. The miracles of Our Lord's promise she often performed.

Organizationally she showed a daring adaptability, almost a fluidity, a practical venturesomeness in extending her Evangel and her life, which betokened a spirit little short of a divine incaution. Yet as she went forward almost over-eagerly to meet the seemingly insurmountable obstacles in her path, she moved serenely, calmly, as possessing a life already transcending the times and the tides of a fallen world. From the beginning she moved as the figure of a New Jerusalem come down from heaven as a bride adorned for her husband, a newly ordered, completely re-created social body. And in her will to set forward the work of her redeeming action, her members endured the dangers of exhausting travel, the murderous hostility of human enemies, hunger and want, personal humiliation and isolation and, when called upon for ultimate witness, a martyr's death. Such are the marks of the Sacramental metacosmic humanity of Our Incarnate Lord.

#### THE CHURCH IN LATER AGES

And whenever this metacosmic humanity is genuinely manifested among men in any age the marks of the Church are ever those of faith perfected in Our Lord Sacramentally present in her midst; of hope perfected in the ever-recurring consummation of the Offerings of her growth by Sacramental reception into His risen life; of love perfected in that organic unity which is the fruit of the return of these Offerings to herself again, in complete oneness with Our Lord in His Body and His Blood.

One of the most striking outward characteristics of Our Lord's metacosmic humanity is its courage. This is not merely a physical courage, although this is certainly present. But it is the courage of faith that the Church's tasks can be accomplished in spite of humanly seeming overwhelming adverse odds; faith in the marvellous potentialities of man as revealed in their redeemed fulfilment in Our Lord; faith in Our Lord's promise that His work can and will triumph over every obstacle and opposition of the fallen world.

Thus the Church—when she really *is* the metacosmic Church—moves in freedom. She has freedom from fear of material hardship, because she expects to embrace this when it comes. She is free from the fear of failure, because her ultimate victory is already assured. She has freedom from worried preoccupation with the immediate delights and securities available on the terms laid down by a fallen world, because she is already entering prophetically upon the new delights and new securities of the re-ordered world of a redeemed future history. She is thus free to attack her present evilly constituted environment, though this crash around her in revolution before it can be made over to prepare the way of the Lord. She has freedom from doubt and misgiving, because she has sure knowledge of her appointed goal. She has freedom from human mistrust within her brotherhood, because her love perfected in her Lord, casts out fear. She has freedom from the sins and disorders of the fallen world, because her fellowship is already received into the perfection of Our Lord's humanity and by His living action, in spite of persisting or repeated human failures, can continually be reperfected in Him. Materially and psychologically she lives an integrated life, an ordered corporate life whose individual units, even while they fight for a wider spread of the redemption of the world environment, begin at once to experience in advance the rounded fulfilment of every need and potentiality of human nature.

#### THE NATURAL AND THE SUPERNATURAL VIRTUES

Thus the members of Our Lord's humanity, by the grace of the Holy Spirit in their midst, perfect the natural virtues of courage, wisdom and justice as they go about their appointed tasks in dealing with their fellows in the Incarnation and with the problems of their still unredeemed environmental world. But when these natural virtues are brought into the metacosmic process of the Divine Community they emerge as those supernatural virtues which only Our Lord's Incarnation can bestow. They emerge as virtues which may not be attained by unaided man, but which may be

infused by God alone. The wisdom brought forward in the Offertory emerges in the Holy Communion as a divinely implanted faith which both knows Our Lord and cleaves unwaveringly to His work, even in the face of humanly seeming impossibilities. The courage of the Offertory emerges as the hope which surmounts every human defeat and counsels advance when natural man alone in a fallen world must needs retreat. And justice consecrated upon the Altar returns to its offerers as that Christian love which, in fact, includes within itself all other virtues, and which in eternity can bind men into perfect unity with the Blessed Trinity through the Incarnation of God the Son. Thus even while the Church Militant here in earth fights the bloody battle with the world of hate, injustice and decay, she is already a joyous, prophetic social organism, showing forth the characteristics of a redeemed world microcosmically far in advance of its macrocosmic achievement. And she points by the ordered sureness of her metacosmic life in earth to the vision of man's full salvation in eternity.

#### THE TENSION BETWEEN PERSONAL FREEDOM AND CORPORATE SOCIAL ALLEGIANCE

Another point worthy of particular mention concerns the metacosmic resolution of that age old tension which seems always to be felt when man tries to satisfy his potentialities both for a full individual personal development, and for an equally full and harmonious corporate social life. These two potentialities exist side by side among the endowments of human nature. Common sense should teach us that they cannot be mutually exclusive; for no individual can develop fully as a person unless he live a life of fruitful social interchange within an organized human environment. The individual must express himself, and so develop himself, by entering into rational relationships with other men. An individual cannot develop as a solitary and yet completely human being. This cannot happen even through a relationship with God, if other human beings be excluded; for man is by nature a social creature. Love to God cannot be

expressed without an expression of love to one's fellow men. As St. John remarks, if a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how shall he love God whom he hath not seen?<sup>103</sup> God's own perfection is seen in the social unity of the Blessed Trinity, and since man as an individual is not constituted as a self-contained social being, he cannot fulfil his true nature as created in the image of God except through a correspondingly perfected social intercourse with his fellow men.

On the other hand, no organized society can dispense with the fullest possible personal development of its respective individual human units; for it is from the integrated relationships of persons in vast and rich variety that the wealth of its own corporate values emerges.

In practice, however, men have found a proper individual self regard and a proper corporate social allegiance exceedingly difficult to reconcile in an unconflicting, mutually complementary manner. Historically, our scientists, philosophers and religious leaders have tended to divide into two groups according to the relative priority which they have given to the importance of individual development as against the perfection of social organization. On the one hand some have believed that if the social order of human life were perfected according to a certain chosen pattern, then a desired personal development of individuals within this order would pretty much follow as a matter of necessity. Such people have stressed the advisability of setting up a carefully constituted state, if necessary by the invocation of social force. In modern times such theorists are called totalitarians. The highest development of the individual, so they think, must emerge from the imposition of a social order which is given total precedence over its individual units. Others have taken the opposite view, contending that if individuals can be fully developed and "perfected" as mature units of humanity, then an adequate system of social relationships will certainly constitute itself, without the invocation of force and merely as a necessary

<sup>103</sup> 1 John 4:20.

fruit of the mutual contacts of such perfected individuals. Theorists of this school of thought tend to abhor employing even a modicum of coercion over any individual whatever. They are called anarchists.

This controversy between totalitarianism and anarchism is an ancient one. It is the old controversy between beliefs which stem from exaggeratedly one-sided interpretations of the respective teachings of Plato the Academician and Zeno the Stoic. This is a difficult controversy to settle in the abstract, because in known historical experience the personal and the social potentialities in human nature have never found a reconciliation which has proved practically workable and which at the same time has given complete opportunity for the full development of both. A full actualization of human nature seems to demand nothing less than a complete self-losing of the individual within a corporate social whole of some kind or other. It also seems to demand a complete self-development in individual terms, a fully rounded, autonomous and free individual personality. Humanly speaking, the two demands appear mutually conflicting and paradoxical.

Historical experience teaches clearly enough that neither the extreme of totalitarianism nor that of anarchy can resolve the difficulty. It has been found that a social order imposed by coercion has not developed the highest and freest types of individuals as a kind of inevitable by-product. Nor has exclusive emphasis upon individual development necessarily produced a correspondingly rationally ordered, harmonious social life. In other words, totalitarianism even when benevolently intended tends to produce regimented, habitually non-rational individuals who are not true *persons* in a full sense of that word. And theoretical anarchy (for example the *laissez-faire* ideal of nineteenth century individualistic economic enterprise) has produced not so much the individuality characteristic of proper personal development, as individualism—a very different matter—which wrecks true personality, and which bears fruit not in social order but in the chaos of extreme, socially destructive competition.

## HUMAN RESOLUTIONS OF THIS TENSION ALWAYS SOUGHT IN COMPROMISE

The practical human solution of this difficulty has always been sought in an attempted compromise between the two extremes. Men have had to have some sort of enforced social order, some kind of political state, empowered to invoke coercion against too individualistic infringements of the basic principles of its constitution. At the same time, they have tried to reserve as large an area of individualistic behavior—and even of downright anti-social behavior—as is compatible with the perpetuation of the chosen social structure.

The most successful approaches to this kind of compromise have been our present-day bourgeois capitalist, political democracies. We have set up states to which we can give our allegiance. We thus satisfy, in part at least, the natural human necessity of individual self-giving to a corporate social whole. The usual modern name for this kind of allegiance is patriotism. In times of war or other national danger this allegiance can be developed to a point of claiming individual self-losing in a high degree. And because this relatively complete self-losing is not in general common, or even socially desirable in times of peace, war brings to many citizens of the political democracies a kind of catharsis which appears almost mystical,<sup>104</sup> because it is so refreshing after the relative frustration of the self-losing human potentiality in times of normal, peaceful life.

For in peaceful times the citizens of the modern democracies reserve as much room for individualistic activity as possible. Corporately unchecked, individualistic reservations are made most notably in the areas of the economic life of citizens. Here they try to reserve complete individualistic freedom of action. It is considered a grave and highly dangerous abuse of democracy if the coercion of the political state impinges upon private business enterprise. In theory the economic area of life is reserved for individual-

<sup>104</sup> Note the manifestation of this in the "Union Sacrée" of France and the "Burgfriede" in Germany in 1914.

istic development and self-expression. It is here that that other necessity of human nature, the free development of the individual person, is supposed at least theoretically to find its opportunity for actualization without any *a priori* and trammeling corporate references whatever.

But this kind of compromise, in which neither the human potentiality for social self-giving, nor the correlative potentiality for the completely free development of individual personality can ever be concurrently completely actualized, has never proved permanently satisfactory to the majority of people. Within it there is a continuing experience of conflict and inconsistency. Historically men have therefore tended to sway back and forth, making experiments either in the direction of social totalitarianism or of individualistic anarchy. As has been said, the modern bourgeois democracies, with their relatively stable political states and with cultural structures to which individual citizens may often adhere with emotional pride, combined with the reservation of a relative individualism in economic matters, have given us the most successful compromises of this kind to date. But even in the modern politically democratic world, vast numbers of people, significantly enough very often its most active and vigorous inhabitants, have recently given their allegiances to the totalitarian state orders of fascism. Surely this betokens some kind of dangerous mass frustration of the self-giving human potentiality within our bourgeois capitalist system of "free enterprise." The widespread emotional rejection of our compromise method of achieving individual freedom shows that capitalist individualism in practice is providing neither a satisfactory opportunity for a truly personal development, nor is it providing within what has come to be the most important area of secular life, the economic structure, anything which can call forth and satisfy fully a rational and enthusiastic corporate allegiance. Thus in the western world satisfaction even with the bourgeois capitalist compromise is beginning seriously to wane.

Yet in spite of its inherent unsatisfactoriness, it appears that "corporateness with reservations" is the only solution

open to unaided man within a fallen world. It might be called the "solution of Ananias and Saphira." This married couple, we are told, made a great show of total giving of their worldly goods to the early Christian community in Jerusalem. At the same time, with careful worldly wisdom they secretly kept back something of their money for their personal individual use.<sup>105</sup> This reservation was condemned by the Christian community in no uncertain terms. When their action was found out, it is reported that the two offenders died from the shock and chagrin of their exposure. Yet every secular solution of this dilemma comes to just this kind of thing. Man sets up a social structure of some kind, some potential entity to which he gives corporate allegiance up to a point. But what he calls personal, individual freedom is preserved by withholding something—frequently as much as possible—from any corporate self-giving. Unfortunately for the success of this kind of arrangement, the full realization of man's true nature—in other words, the redemption of man—requires the *complete* satisfaction of these two deep potentialities. Man needs to give himself completely, and without any reservation whatever, either material or spiritual, to a corporate social life. He needs also basically to be concerned with a full development of his personal autonomy as a rational individual. He needs as an individual both to lose this individuality and at the same time to keep it at its best. He appears to need to be, at one and the same time and quite uncompromisingly, both a totalitarian and an anarchist!

#### FULL RESOLUTION FOUND IN THE INCARNATION

The solution of this dilemma is found only within the New World of the Incarnation. The Offertory does make a total demand upon the members of Our Lord's social humanity. When the bread and wine are placed upon the Altar nothing may be reserved to the individuals making the offering. As Our Lord tells us, he that loves father or mother, or son or daughter more than Him, is not worthy

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<sup>105</sup> Acts of the Apostles, 5:1-11.

of Him;<sup>106</sup> and he that loves his own life shall lose it.<sup>107</sup> Not even the most precious potentialities of human life may be held back for individual use. If as in the case of Ananias and Saphira worldly-wise considerations of human welfare, individual careers, or even preservation of lives themselves cause such partial withholding, then the Offertory is greatly compromised and those who make the reservations take part in the Memorial at grave danger to themselves. Here is demanded a total allegiance. The individual must indeed be lost. And here in the Community of the Holy Spirit man's deep and natural need for complete and utter individual self-losing to a social whole is fully met. The social demand of the Divine Community is indeed a totalitarian demand. When properly responded to, as it must be by genuine Christians, it gives that satisfaction to the natural human craving which only total sinking of the individual in a social organism can supply.

The unreserved total gift by His individual members of themselves and of all that they have to the corporate humanity of His Incarnation is accepted by Our Lord at the Offertory. It is then consummated in an absolute perfection in the Consecration of the Bread and Wine. But immediately thereafter Our Lord turns again to those who, as individuals, have given their all to Him, and gives to them in return His own Body and Blood. In necessary concomitance He thus bestows Himself also in His own totality. And since the total Gifts of the Offertory have now been received by Him into His risen life, these too now concomitantly return with Him from eternity into human time again. In this Holy Communion each single member of Our Lord's social humanity receives his own life, lost within the social totality of the body of the Incarnation, but here rebestowed freely into his individual keeping. Each individual, now united to Our Lord by the Gift of the Holy Communion, is by this same Gift endowed again with completely free personal autonomy. He is thus left utterly free to the end that he may, in turn, freely and autonomous-

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<sup>106</sup> Matt. 10:37-38.

<sup>107</sup> John 12:25.

ly give himself again in a reaffirmed total allegiance to Our Lord's continuing social organism. And in this rebestowed individual freedom—a freedom to reaffirm an equally total social allegiance—man's need for complete personal autonomy is also perfectly met.

But this solution of the problem *is not the achievement of fallen man*. The total social corporateness of the Divine Community is the work of the Holy Spirit making it possible for men to lose their individual lives as they prepare their Offertory within the growing organism of Our Lord's redeeming humanity. And the rebestowal of personal autonomy is the free Gift of Our Lord in the Holy Communion, recommitting into the hands of His individual members the lives which have first been received corporately and totally into Himself.

By Metacosmisis the total corporateness brought forward in the Offertory becomes perfect personal individuality in the Holy Communion. Totalitarian allegiance becomes individual autonomy. Total service to Our Lord in and through His Community becomes the highest and most glorious individual freedom.<sup>108</sup> Thus does complete and unreserved social losing of individual life turn out to be that necessary element in the content of the Offertory on the natural level of Our Lord's social humanity which is required that it may become an equally complete and uninfringed finding of autonomous personal life in its Consecration, and that it may be rebestowed in its form of metacosmic freedom in the Holy Communion.

This personal freedom is attained, not by partial individual reservation, not by keeping something back at the corporate Offertory, but by a conversion of a total relinquishment of individual life into that freedom which emerges at the end of the Sacramental process as the fruit of Metacosmisis. And a metacosmic individual freedom, fashioned thus from that which begins, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, as a voluntary bondage within the Sacramental Com-

<sup>108</sup> Cf. Book of Common Prayer, Collect for Peace at Morning Prayer. "Whose service *is* perfect freedom" is a highly metacosmic expression.

munity, is the only freedom proper to those who are redeemed by Our Lord as His brethren in the Incarnation and, therefore, as the sons of God. It is the only individual freedom in this fallen world which can forthwith adequately lend itself again to total corporate dedication for the preparation of a succeeding Offertory to come.

This analysis enables us to see that there is nothing essentially evil in the total allegiance of individuals to a corporate order. There is nothing essentially evil in what might be called the strictly "total" element of present-day totalitarianisms. The evil here resides in the fact that human totalitarianism in a fallen world is inevitably so constituted that, while it both can and does receive the lives of its individual members as they lose themselves in its social whole, it can never rebestow the individual personal autonomies which are thus relinquished. Human totalitarianism involves a kind of demonic offertory. It provides a pseudo-satisfaction of the self-losing impulse which has now shown itself able to deceive millions of people. But this demonic counterfeit of the Christian Offertory can be followed by neither a Consecration nor the Gift of the Holy Communion. There is no Metacosmesis. It is therefore a self-losing which cannot be followed by metacosmic conversion into the finding of life. It is followed instead by the unconsecrated and irrevocable bondage of hell.

Furthermore, personal autonomy, individual freedom, is certainly not an evil in itself either. Men may not be classified as reprehensible when they see the value of individual personality. The difficulty here experienced lies in the fact that in a fallen world individual freedom must be sought by holding back something in such wise that the complementary social self-giving is partly vitiated. Furthermore, individual freedom preserved by withholding, loses its own value by that very circumstance. It has been withheld from the Offertory. It tries to alter Our Lord's dictum of "He that loseth his life in this world shall find it," to, "He that keepeth something back of his life shall at least have this much!" This always proves unsatisfactory

and, when extremely pursued, it is disastrously anti-social. This is why no man-made "democracy," in spite of relative or temporary success, can ever meet the full requirement of human redemption. Only Our Lord in His Sacramental Community can meet both necessities fully and so break the horns of this dilemma.

In a fallen world Christians have no alternative but to seek the humanly democratic compromise. In the world of Original Sin, the only other present alternative is demonic totalitarianism. This is why Christians today are bound to fight for human democracy and must seek to destroy fascism. Fascism is infinitely the worse secular solution of man's present social difficulties. And in an unredeemed world, the enabling power of the Atonement, in this particular situation as in all other environmental difficulties, will make it possible for Christians to make those temporary compromises and reservations which human democracy even at its best demands. If it turn out historically unavoidable, the Atonement will enable Christians to be the champions even of social structures forcefully imposed in temporary revolutionary situations, provided these structures move essentially in the direction of a more successful future human democracy rather than in the direction of fascism. For example, it is now sufficiently clear in the case of Soviet Russia that certain social rigidities, resulting both from persisting revolutionary difficulties and from recent war, are not by any means the same kinds of rigidities lately found in Nazi Germany. As the late Archbishop of Canterbury once pointed out, the present potentialities of Russian Communism all point in the direction of a most thorough human democracy. To many observers it begins to appear as the nearest human approach to a solution of the problem of the individual-social tension which the secular world has as yet found. The human totalitarianism of Communism, in so far as it persists, is accidental to a situation and not constitutional to a system. On the other hand, every fascist state must be constitutionally totalitarian.<sup>109</sup> In principle it can never move from this position unless it be overthrown. It is there-

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<sup>109</sup> Cf. note 78.

fore demonic. Hence for Christians to choose fascism—or any of its subtle modifications which are showing their heads within our western Democracies—in preference to something like the present Russian socialist order would be a secular environmental choice tempting the power of the Atonement beyond endurance. Were it tendered as an element within the Offertory, the choice of fascism would be present there not as an unavoidable contingency, but as a vitiating sin, since the other vastly more suitable choice is a present available secular alternative.

But in the meantime within their own Sacramental group, Christians can find the problem solved far in advance of the full redemption of the secular world. It is solved basically by Our Lord Himself who (unlike human "leaders") both receives the unreserved corporate allegiance of His Community and rebestows individual autonomy upon its members. The individual reservations necessary in the environing world are utterly out of place in the metacosmic organism of Our Lord's humanity. The sin of Ananias and Saphira was that in keeping something back for themselves they behaved towards the ordered life of the Divine Community *as if it were still a part of the fallen world*. They lacked the faith to make a total gift, because they lacked the faith to believe Our Lord's promise that within His social body he that totally loses his life does really find it! To make this kind of reservation of individualistic "freedom" within the Community of the Holy Spirit is indeed to sin against Him. If men come to the Offertory with reservations for individual lives, they vitiate His work among them. As St. Peter said of Ananias and his wife, they tempt the Spirit of the Lord.<sup>110</sup> And this sin cannot be forgiven while the reservations persist; for by its very nature it blocks the whole process of reconciliation, the whole functional life of a metacosmic humanity.

#### SOURCES OF DEFECTS IN THE METACOSMIC HUMANITY OF THE CONTEMPORARY CHURCH

The conventional Church of today seems on the whole to

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<sup>110</sup> Acts of the Apostles, 5:9.

exhibit few of those metacosmic characteristics which were found in the individual humanity of Our Lord and in His social humanity of the years immediately succeeding His ascension. The reasons for this may well lie in the fact that her members have forgotten the corporately total claim made upon them by the Divine Community of the Holy Spirit. They have forgotten that nothing less than a complete corporate giving of themselves into Our Lord's humanity will do. The Church's leaders neither teach nor guide her members practically in this direction. She therefore lacks her proper character as a redeeming social organism because her members—whether through ignorance, through disbelief or through lack of living faith—habitually sin the sin of Ananias and Saphira.

The metacosmic character of the Divine Community may also be seriously lessened if its members refuse or neglect to accept again the personal and free responsibility with which Our Lord would entrust them in the Holy Communion. For by such refusal or neglect they both affront His trust and frustrate the spread of the Incarnation. This sin too is widespread in the Church. It may also be weakened by that deficiency in the exercise of persevering prayer which, as we have noted in the case of the Apostles, Our Lord said had prevented the cure of an epileptic boy while He Himself was absent on the Mount of the Transfiguration. And certainly the cultivation of the great art of prayer and meditation is gravely neglected by many Christians in this age. The prayer content of the bread and wine of the average Offertory is very meagre indeed.

But what needs chiefly to be emphasized in our time is that the realization of a metacosmic humanity through the reception of the Holy Communion requires an adequately patterned and fulfilled Offertory as its prior condition. Altogether too many Christians who would like to call themselves Catholics draw near to the Altar without so much as giving a thought to that complete self-losing within the life and work of the Community of the Holy Spirit which the Offertory demands. They come instead seeking something for themselves, some comfort, some aid, some power

for their own individual natural lives. Perhaps in more expansive moments they come seeking favors for others who are dear to them. But, to put it bluntly, this is really coming with a purpose to use Our Lord for ends of their own.

To do this is to pervert the process of Our Lord's Memorial. The individual members of His group may not come to Him holding fast to their own lives, their own individual persons, merely asking Him to intervene to strengthen, to heal or to patch up, so that they may continue to lead these lives in a "better" way. They must come in order to give themselves to Him completely. If within the power of the Atonement they ask for help at this point, if they ask for healing and forgiveness at the time of the Offertory, if they intercede for others, this must be primarily that the Offertory itself may be perfected for Our Lord's reception. But so far as their own continuing individual lives are concerned, they must come to lose them there totally in Our Lord's Incarnate humanity.

Subsequently—after the Consecration and in the Holy Communion—they receive again their individual lives, not merely healed, but absolutely perfected in union with Our Lord. But neither is this the primary purpose of the approach to the Altar. The purpose of the approach is giving, not getting. Individuals may not even come to the Offer-tory saying subtly within themselves: "If I give myself, I shall get myself back again. Our Lord has promised this!" Our Lord has promised no such thing. To suggest it is to try to bargain with Him. He has merely stated a truth about His Memorial when it is properly carried through and its Metacosmosis complete. But to give one's life in order to find one's life is just another crafty method of self-reservation. Within the Offertory individuals must be prepared literally to relinquish everything, even life itself. The return Gift of complete personal freedom and of individuality after the corporate Offertory, should be viewed as a marvellous, not to say amazing, boon. It is a boon which may not be demanded under any terms of human justice. It may not be asked for; it ought not even to be expected. It trans-

cends the merit of man. It is not the obligation of God. It is of Our Lord's free grace alone. But let those who approach Our Lord's Altar ponder the truth that unless there be lives completely lost within the Offertory, there will in turn be no lives metacosmically found within the Holy Communion. Even God cannot rebestow lives which are withheld from Him.

## XII

### A Metacosmic World Order

#### A REDEEMED SOCIAL ORDER MUST BE SACRAMENTAL

RIGHTLY CARRIED THROUGH, with single-hearted purpose, the metacosmic process of the Memorial of Our Lord's Body and Blood does solve completely the problem which total social perfection poses for autonomous personal individuality. It is a solution which men will ever seek in vain within a fallen world. Therefore, if a fully redeemed social order ever be realized here in earth, it must be a Sacramental order, its economic and political structures functionally incorporated within the social body of the Incarnation. Such an order is the only one which can ever perfectly fulfil, without warping or perversion, both the corporate and the individually personal potentialities of man.

We are very far from the attainment of a Sacramental social order. The majority of the world is not yet even nominally converted to the Religion of the Incarnation; and the majority of nominal Christians do not understand their own religion in world-redeeming terms at all. In fact the conventional opinion of recent years has tended in the opposite direction. Religion is supposed to be a private matter. It should be "free." This means that the administration of material and political affairs must never interfere with anyone's religious theories or practices. But as a bargained price for this kind of secular non-interference, religion must in turn seek no functional interrelation with practical or material affairs. Religion is considered to be a world apart.

To suggest the necessity of a Sacramental world order is nevertheless merely to make the straightforward rational demand that human social life shall be one single ordered

whole; that life shall not be divided into three unrelated, watertight compartments, each with an independent structure labelled—as these are now respectively—the political order, the economic order and the religious order. In a functionally redeemed society man will not live in three theoretically separate insulated worlds at one and the same time. He must live in one world, everyone of whose elements will be rationally integrated and functionally interrelated. For reasons of convenience we may then continue to make logical distinctions between matters which are primarily religious, or political or economic. But ultimately such distinctions can have no constitutional or structural basis.

#### THE MEDIEVAL VISION AND THE SOURCE OF ITS PRACTICAL FAILURE

During the middle ages the Christian western world saw at least dimly a vision of this kind of integrally unified order. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that men saw that it was somehow required by the Religion of the Incarnation, rather than to affirm that they came to a clear understanding of what such a world order would be like. For in their attempt to realize this kind of social unity they failed miserably. The medieval attempt at a social synthesis came in the end to little more than a claim that all the affairs of men ought to be subject, completely and without further appeal, to the despotic and absolute authority of the Roman Pontiff.<sup>111</sup>

The reasons for this medieval failure are numerous and complicated in their ramifications. We can perhaps distinguish two primary ones. First of all, the Catholic Church of that time was not teaching Christianity as a religion of the redemption of the world any more than she is today. Paradoxically, the more fully the Church came to assert her “temporal authority,” the less did she appear to understand the meaning of her own liturgical life. In particular did she fail to explain the world-redeeming work required by

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<sup>111</sup> Contemporary Roman claims, logically analyzed, come to much this same theory.

an understanding of the Offertory. The late middle ages, the very time of greatest pretense to temporal power by the Church, was a time of unexampled liturgical decay. Christianity was being presented exclusively as a soul-saving affair for separate individuals. Christian morals were being conceived exclusively in terms of legalistic individual obedience to a set of rules which, if kept, would get people into heaven. Our Lord's Memorial was being viewed not as the central act of a redeeming corporate process of Metacosmosis involving Offertory, Consecration and Holy Communion, but as mere propitiatory sacrifice understood in a scape-goat sense, in behalf of legally erring individual souls. Such a religion of extricationism, as we have pointed out from the beginning of this book, is almost impossible to connect rationally with an authoritative interest in the redemption of man's organized social life within this world. Therefore, the assertion of temporal authority on the part of the Church seemed then both arbitrary and logically out of place, just as it appears in this light today to people, Protestant or "Catholic," who still think in terms of an extricationist religion. The majority of "Christian" people in the medieval world were believers in this kind of religion. They had never been taught any other Christianity. And with the absence of practically all metacosmic understanding of the Sacramental life, the Church's claim to temporal authority could not be intelligently founded upon a Sacramental functional interest in the redemption of the world. It came to be more and more the mere expression of a lust for an unredeemed worldly power on the part of ecclesiastical officers. This kind of claim to secular authority was intolerable. It was properly rejected by the world.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> Unfortunately, the claims to temporal power on the part of the Roman Church at present have not changed their evil character. They are claims made not on behalf of the redemption of the world, but on behalf of the advantage of a great religious institution dealing in extrication "Christianity." These advantages are sought most frequently on terms of bargain and compromise with an unredeemed environment. Once again, such bargains issue not as contingencies within the Offertory but, since they tempt the Atonement, they remain as sins.

The second reason for the medieval failure lay in a lack of sufficient practical knowledge concerning the basic nature of the unredeemed secular world's disorders. And this absence of necessary rational knowledge would very likely have blocked the way to the attainment of a genuinely Sacramental social order, even if the medieval Church herself had understood aright the true character of her Christian task. This kind of ignorance can again today block the Christian redeeming effort, unless it yields to a much more exact practical scientific understanding of the laws governing the movements of social change than prevails in most contemporary Christian circles.

For Christians, when they have thought at all in terms of a social order integrated with the Sacramental life, seem to have considered their contemporary secular order itself as already in some sense a single unified structure. In the medieval period the secular world was conceived as primarily a political structure. And this was not only viewed as being a unified whole, but as possessing constitutionally a pattern compatible with a redeemed Christian order. Evil individuals were known to be present within it and it was admitted that these hampered its perfect working. But the structure itself, once the bad people should be eliminated or converted, seemed genuinely available for integration with the religious structure, that is, with the Church.<sup>113</sup>

#### CONTRIBUTIONS OF KARL MARX TO SCIENTIFIC SOCIAL UNDERSTANDING

To the work of Karl Marx we owe a practical understanding of the manner in which the secular order itself still lacks that kind of "pre-Christian" unity which must certainly be attained before we can think of integrating this into the all-embracing future unity of a Christian religious

<sup>113</sup> The medieval name given to the secular structure was: The Holy Roman Empire. This was a name for something which was never fully actualized. But it existed in men's imaginations as a kind of Platonic Idea of a genuinely perfected secular political structure embracing the whole world.

structure. The secular order all along, whether medieval feudal or present day capitalist, has never been adequately comprehended in any merely political analysis. On the contrary, every secular order which has thus far emerged<sup>114</sup> can be seen upon modern scientific analysis to consist of two interrelated but distinguishable structures. One of these is economic, and the other is political. That the economic structure could be thus separately analyzed apart from the political order of society probably never dawned upon the medieval mind.

In the sphere of men's economic relationships the Church has indeed always taught the necessity of human justice. She has also taught that riches or possessions beyond those necessary to maintain individuals in a style "proper to their station" ought, as a matter of moral obligation, to be distributed to the poor and underprivileged in the name of Christian charity. But the virtues of justice and charity have heretofore been required as individual virtues. They have been seen in the light of virtues which try to undo by individual action the evil effects of social injustice enthroned in the secular order *after these effects have already come into being*. Until recently it seems not to have occurred to men that justice and charity might be incorporated as structural principles in a new economic order. Instead, it has apparently been supposed that certain unjust accumulations of wealth and social maldistribution of the material means of human life are somehow inevitable. Individuals have therefore been enjoined to mitigate the evil effects of such injustice by equally individual decisions to reduce their accumulated fortunes in private charity.<sup>115</sup> In practice, too, even this exercise of charity has often been equated to giving generously to the accumulating endowments of the organized Church. But that men, by intelligent planning, might socialize both justice and charity in a correspondingly ordered economic system, so that unjust accumulations of wealth could not come into being in the first place—so that

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<sup>114</sup> With the exception of the socialist order of the U. S. S. R.

<sup>115</sup> This seems to be the practical content of the "stewardship" theory of the ownership of material wealth.

both superabundant individual accumulations and correspondingly mitigating individual decisions of charity could be largely eliminated at their structural roots—is a practical scientific understanding which has grown in its systematized form only since the days of Karl Marx. This understanding is a modern phenomenon.

Unfortunately it has not made much progress in the official mind of the organized Church. In her official pronouncements within the present crisis the Church seems still to cling to the notion that justice and charity must be implemented solely in individual actions. “Mitigate and compensate the evil effects of injustice” is still the Church’s advice. She recoils from radical attack upon the secular structure whence the same evils inevitably and recurrently proceed.<sup>116</sup>

Beyond the analytical separation of our political and economic structures the one from the other, a still further analysis or breakdown needs to be made of the economic structures themselves. For, with the notable exception of the case of the Soviet Union, every such structure which has so far appeared on the stage of human history can in its turn be analytically broken down into two subsidiary social structures. We discover that all economic structures hitherto have had their memberships subdivided within them into two other great groups or economic classes. And people fall into the one or the other of these two classes according as to whether they do or do not have a share in the ownership of the means of economic production. Those who have no share in such ownership tend, as a class, to become almost completely subject to that other class which

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<sup>116</sup> This is a charge which is practically one hundred percent justified in the case of the Roman Church. The Anglican Church shows a somewhat more hopeful realization of the social necessities of the times. The Anglican shortcoming is instead a great lack of dogmatic clarity which results in much confusion. The Russian Orthodox Church has now learned to “get along” with the most hopeful economic order which has yet appeared among men. Whether she understands the exceptional advantages of her situation in Incarnational terms remains to be seen. So far she has given no indication of this to the outside world.

does enjoy such ownership. Whether as slaves, as serfs or as wage-workers the members of the non-owning economic class end up as the servants of the class which owns lands, raw materials, tools, and other means of production. In general, the possessing class in every historical period has turned out to be the real ruling class. And this holds true even when the members of the owning class, rather than come into open view as the true rulers of the world, prefer to remain in the background and to exercise their power, not directly as the economic power it really is, but through other political figures, through kings, potentates or elected representatives who are made to appear as possessing primary power, while all the time this has its real seat elsewhere.

In this manner, our own present secular bourgeois world is not only divided into political and economic structures, but the economic structure in its turn is subdivided into a ruling and a subject class whose relative power relationships derive from the fact that the ruling class at this very time has exclusive private ownership (and therefore undemocratic control) of the world's productive facilities, whether these be lands, or factories, or mines, or other sources of materials and manufactured articles necessary to human welfare.

Thus in actuality the present western secular situation is far from presenting a picture of structural unity whose social perfection is, as it is too commonly supposed, marred only by the presence of evil but potentially convertible, individuals. It presents instead in all the bourgeois nations a picture of political structures—whether relatively democratic or out and out fascist in constitution—which are divided from our capitalist economic structures. And every capitalist economic structure, wherever found, is in its turn also constitutionally divided within itself.

It is divided into classes on a basis of ownership and non-ownership respectively of certain kinds of property. Furthermore, it is divided in such wise that the respective corporate economic interests of these two classes actually

conflict with one another. And this conflict persists whether the people involved in these class relationships be good or evil in their private personal intentions. Thus, for example, if the owners of factories in our present capitalist economy make as large profits as are required for the carrying on of their businesses, this has to be, in the structural nature of the case, at the expense of the non-owning wage-workers. And if wage-workers organize and enforce a greater and more just material share for themselves than would be provided by the normal operation of the system, this damages the material welfare of the factory owners.

#### FUNCTION OF THE POLITICAL STATE

This kind of constitutional conflict in the economic structure of the secular order has, with the passage of time, tended in every historical case to set up great—and eventually dangerous—strains in the current economic structure. The non-owning class tends always to expand both in numbers and in organized power to the point of offering a serious threat to the power of the owning class. Therefore, in the interests of its own self-defense, the threatened ruling class either sets up a political state, or achieves complete control of one already existing, in such wise that this political state structure may serve the end of control and repression of that other growing, dispossessed economic class which now begins to threaten the ruling economic class both in its secular power and its hitherto undisputed possession of capital wealth.

This political structure of the repressive political state has often been very cleverly conceived. In the present western world, apart from the countries which have unashamedly embraced fascism, the state power usually appears to be vested in an impartial social authority constituted to preserve the rights and privileges of all citizens without regard to their economic class status. In our modern democracies a fairly universal suffrage seems to give a basic share in the genuine control of the state and its policies to all citizens without economic class distinction.

But Marx has shown—it would seem beyond reasonable dispute—that the function of the political state is basically always that of forcefully maintaining the current economic ruling class in its position of power. Even while it serves this basic purpose it may offer deceptively large opportunities for the members of the non-ruling economic class to exert moderating pressures for the amelioration of their real status. Indeed, one of the purposes of the bourgeois state is precisely to aid the economic ruling class, not by open suppression of the wage-workers' threatening class demands, but by contriving allowable and economically safe concessions to the just demands of that class and by such means giving the impression to its members that in reality they are not in a subject position, but that they have instead a wide control over their own rights and destinies through the exercise of their politically democratic privilege of voting for or against representative state officers. When, in deepening economic crisis this relatively mild and subtle method of political control is no longer adequate to the preservation of the ascendancy of the economic ruling class, the latter, in an agony of fear, abolishes its "democratic" class-police state and sets up a fascist one. The tensions between the ruling and ruled economic classes have then become so dangerous that to preserve the capitalist system of private ownership of industrial means of production, the wage-working class must be controlled by an imposed, undemocratic violence. And that is what fascism essentially is. The only alternative to this would be a radical change from a capitalist to a socialist economic order.

In the western political democracies of today the actual state of affairs, the structural economic class conflict, is kept veiled, partly through almost universal ignorance of the true nature of the political state as a police-handmaid of the economic ruling class, and partly through astute concealment of the basic truth by economic leaders who do understand the situation, but who have the propaganda facilities for keeping it hidden from the majority of the working class.

## MARX'S VIEW OF THE FUNCTION OF RELIGION

Marx himself believed that the religious structure of human life was based upon a complete illusion. He believed in the real existence of no being whatever transcending our sensible world of time and space. He therefore thought that the whole structure of man's religious beliefs and practices was an imagined and invented thing, another cleverly contrived mental anodyne for present real material miseries suffered by the subject economic class. He believed too that this structure had also been invariably appropriated by the current ruling economic class as a most useful agency—complementing the physical, forceful repressions available in emergencies through the political state—to lull rebellious tendencies among economically exploited people into somnolent subservience. On this view, religion is a psychological artifice. It corresponds to no actual reality, but when believed in by the insecure and unhappy masses of working people it can be helpful in preventing rebellion and thus forestalling the unpleasant necessity of invoking the violently repressive police power of the state. And even when such rebellion may take place from time to time, religious persuasion can soften many dangerous situations so that repressive force may be less cruel.<sup>117</sup>

In all humility Christians should admit that a great preponderance of the contemporary religious teaching upon which Marx in his day based his damning judgment did largely justify his analysis. The practical judgments of Karl Marx concerning the secular ends served by religion are even now valid in the presence of most present day conventional Church teaching throughout the world. Therefore, even while we disagree fundamentally with the Marxian judgment upon the basic nature of the Religion of the Incarnation, we can scarcely wonder at it. Neither can we blame Marxists overmuch for an intellectual mistake for which the Christian Church may, in the judgment of history, have to assume a primary responsibility.

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<sup>117</sup> The Roman Pontiff (August, 1943) warned a delegation of working people against the "evils" of revolutionary action.

## THE MARXIAN SOCIAL OBJECTIVE: "WITHERING AWAY" OF THE POLITICAL STATE AND DISAPPEARANCE OF RELIGION

What Marx did seek with all his mind and heart was a truly unified secular order. And in seeking this goal his intention was basically coincident with what ought to be the immediate intention of Christians. For without a prior unity achieved in the secular order there can be no further unified integration of the secular and Incarnational structures of human life. Marx and his successors have set themselves the task of eliminating the present basic material cause of the disunity and conflict in the secular world. They have set about ridding the economic structure of its property-ownership class divisions. This can be done by abolishing that democratically irresponsible right to ruling social power which now inheres in the private ownership of the material means of production. These must become the property of all citizens, instead of the property of a restricted group. When this happens, as in the Soviet Union it has happened already, *economic* classes disappear; for no kind of property is then privately owned in such wise as to give the owners socially irresponsible and exploiting power over any of their fellow men whatever.

A truly democratic control, a genuinely authoritative participation of all people in their corporate destinies, then invades the economic, as well as the merely political structure. The economic ruling class disappears. Thereupon the political state also begins to assume a very different character. It is no longer needed as the organ of forceful repression of a non-owning class by an owning class; for these two economic classes have themselves vanished. The political state as a social structure now tends to coalesce in a genuinely functional way with the economic structure. Certain concerns and functions formerly also associated primarily with the political state will of course still persist. Such concerns, for example, would be those of universal education, of public health, of material social security and of a proper police power for the restraint, now no longer of a whole economic class, but merely of individual social

rebels. Once economic classes based upon private ownership of economic facilities disappear, the need for the political state as a social class police force also vanishes. For this class police function has hitherto always been the primary one of the political state, in spite of assignments to it of certain additional functions and in spite of the careful concealment of the other. The social class police power of the political state has ever been the one primary thing, among all its other concerns, which has necessitated its preservation as that kind of separate structural entity which we know today.

Our kind of political state, when the economic structure is once unified by rendering it classless, will therefore begin to coalesce into a new and single social structure which will be both political and economic at one and the same time. The general environmental character of such an integrated state has been hitherto unknown, because men have never yet experienced it. But we can be sure that the political state *as we know it* will, as Marxists phrase it, inevitably "wither away." The economic and political structures will merge in one.<sup>118</sup>

#### THE MARXIAN VIEW OF THE DISAPPEARANCE OF RELIGION

A Marxian corollary of the merging of the political structure into the economic, would mean in turn, not the "withering away" of the religious structure through coalescence with the others, but its complete cessation. This would be a logical consequence of the Marxian theory of the nature of religion, were it true. For according to this theory the religious structure of social life is based upon a pure superstition. It has a meaning and a use only so long as it furnishes a helpful mythological prop to that repressive police power which is exercised by an economically ruling class through its own controlled creature, the political state. When this kind of class power is no longer required and when, as a result, the political structure itself becomes one with the economic structure, then that shadowy make-be-

<sup>118</sup> Friedrich Engels: *Anti-Dühring*, International Publishers, New York. (Translated by Emile Burns) p. 315.

lieve of religion disappears completely with the complete disappearance of the one sole need which it was invented to meet. Religion having ever been a shadow without substance, the shadow itself must dissolve in the light of an integrated social structure, which contains no class-power tensions, but is a unified, completely democratic whole. The new secular structure being thus set free from all need of the use of trickery and subterfuge, the religious structure, one of the chief pieces of apparatus serving the ends of economic class-power subterfuge, will vanish into literal nothingness.

Marxists, therefore, disregarding the religious structure of life as unreal, view the problem of the reintegration of the world as solely one of bringing together the now separated political and economic structures into a single unified entity. And in order to accomplish this, they see clearly that the economic structure itself must, by way of preparation, first have its own inner constitutional contradictions removed. The economic classes conflictingly inherent in the capitalist organization must be eliminated before any further unifying of the social structure as a whole can proceed.

#### THE NECESSARY CHRISTIAN WITNESS

Christians must gird themselves to bear witness to the fact that the Marxian view of the Religion of the Incarnation is a dangerous error. In spite of the corruptions and derelictions of the Church, both in teaching and in practice, the Christian religion rightly understood remains as always the one supreme reality. It is the one Truth which validates and gives rational meaning to every other human experience and endeavor. It shows forth and establishes that one end towards which every other good human effort, whether economic, political, aesthetic or intellectual, is but a rational means of progressive advance. Therefore, the religious structure of social life, far from being negligible, is instead actually the crowning structure which must embrace in its Incarnational organism—and thus carry into an eternal reference—man's creative accomplishments in every

other subsidiary category of his present life in time and space. When this supreme truth is disregarded, when the end of man's salvation is arbitrarily confined to a rational integration of his life exclusively within the level of this world, then an inversion is embraced which disregards man's true end in an eternal consummation of every human value. This materialist inversion exalts the perfection of life in this world from its status as a means to man's true end, into the status of an end in itself. The Christian witness must therefore remain that to disregard the integration of all human life on earth within the New World of Our Lord's humanity is in the last analysis to court disaster for all mankind.

#### A CHRISTIAN ANALOGUE OF THE MARXIAN ERROR

But even as they proclaim this truth, Christians must also guard themselves against another error of their own, an error which in a certain aspect is analogous to the Marxian one. Marxists view the problem of the reintegration of human life as that of the coalescence of two primary social structures, the economic and the political. They have disregarded the third and most important structure, namely the religious one. But at any rate they have had the practical scientific understanding to see that this re-integration of the social order cannot take place until the internal class contradictions in the economic structure are eliminated. Christians too have tended to over-simplify their own problem. They have been generally lacking in the practical Marxian scientific insight. When in the past Christians have thought in terms of a genuinely Incarnational religion—rather than of a corrupt extricationist one—they too have tended to view the world as divided into only two great structures. For them, one of these has of course been the religious one. The other has gone under the vague name of the secular structure. No further analysis of this latter structure has in general been made, although, as has already been said, the Christian tendency has been to view the secular world as primarily describable in political terms.

Because of this ignorant over-simplification, Christians have tended to regard the economic structure of life, if not as unreal, (as Marxists regard the religious structure) at any rate as having no separate existence and as being already included within the political structure. This mistake alone would account for the medieval failure to achieve a reintegrated social order within the world of the Incarnation. For religious leaders then went naïvely ahead on the assumption that their feudal social structure was sufficiently integrated in its own constitution to fit in its entirety into the Order of the Incarnation. Christians remained sublimely ignorant of the fact that they were also in the presence of an economic structure whose potential and dynamic class contradictions would inevitably prove a complete obstacle to any final integration of the whole social order, unless these contradictions were first eliminated from the constitution of the economic structure itself.

The result of this economic ignorance, and of the consequent analytical error, was that the Church attacked the wrong abuses and failed to attack the real obstacles to her goal. She tried to reform individual evil doers, failing to see that her first<sup>119</sup> problem was not one of conversion of individuals, so much as that of a radical economic change. The Church finally gave up the whole problem and began compromiseingly to consent to the continuing and relatively independent existence of a secular structure parallel with, and alongside of, her own religious structure. She still maintained that the religious structure of human life was somehow the more important one. But she gradually relinquished the aim of a complete reintegration of the two structures, the one within the other. In other words, in her frustration, she finally relinquished even her own high concept of the complete redemption of human life in this world within the New World of the Incarnation, and gave herself over to the business of extricationist, individual soul-saving.

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<sup>119</sup> "First" problem in a chronological—not an hierarchical—sense.

## AGREEMENT OF CHRISTIANS AND MARXISTS UPON IMMEDIATE GOALS

It is to the high concept of the Incarnational redemption of the world as a whole that the Offertory of Our Lord's Memorial recalls Christians, whenever and wherever they fully understand their primary vocation. But in this age we can at least avoid the ignorant errors of our forefathers in the Faith. We can take advantage of the secular truths which Marxists now point out. We can see that before the secular order can be redeemed within a single Incarnational structure, it must first have its own inner constitutional contradictions eliminated. The secular structure must itself be made over into a single structural entity before it can be successfully presented as a whole within the Offertory of the Church's bread and wine. And so, within the area of scientific and revolutionary social action, both Christians and Marxists, at this moment of history, have a common immediate objective. They disagree as to the ultimate reasons for seeking this objective. Marxists consider it an end in itself. Christians seek it as a means of perfecting and enlarging the content of their Offertory. By the grace of the Holy Spirit, Christians seek thus to reduce the present necessary extent of the social application of the Atonement. But, for the immediate future, the preparatory work of St. John Baptist and the social revolutionary work of Karl Marx, seem in the providence of God to coincide. Until the members of the humanity of the Incarnation realize this latter truth, and devote both their attention and their action to it afresh, they cannot expect the full power of the metacosmic humanity of Our Lord to appear again in their midst.

### A BRIEF RECAPITULATION

To sum up, Marxists over-simplify their real problem by assuming that there are only two major structures corresponding to abiding values within man's socially organized life. These are the political and economic structures.

They correctly see that the term "secular order" does not yet stand for any single, integrated unity. They also correctly see that man's social life cannot be reintegrated into a non-selfcontradictory whole unless the class economic structure of capitalism be altered into a classless socialist structure. Marxists see, furthermore, that the political class-police state as we know it will "wither away" by coalescence with the economic structure, once the inner structural contradictions of the latter are removed. The religious structure of human life will then simply *vanish* away. To Marxists this means the basically complete solution to the whole problem of the reintegration of human life.

Christians, on the other hand, while maintaining the supreme reality of that final end of man for which the religious structure of life stands, have over-simplified their own problem in an analogous manner. They have overlooked the obstacles of structural disorder, of constitutional economic class conflicts with which the secular order confronts them. They have also interpreted their problem of the reintegration of the secular social structure into the religious structure as if they too were in the presence of only these *two* major organized social entities. Christians must learn from the Marxists that their supposedly unified secular order not only has two parts to it, the political and the economic, but that its economic part itself needs at this point of history to be socialized and rendered classless. In this case, the political and economic portions of the secular environment will indeed coalesce and the secular structure will begin to present a functional unity which can then be dealt with as a whole in further Incarnational terms. Christians will then be in a position to show forth more clearly the necessity of integrating this new and genuinely unified secular structure into the Incarnational structure.

In the meantime Christians themselves must purify their own Sacramental, Incarnational nuclei. They must make their own principles rationally more clear. And they must hold their own Incarnational world in readiness for a consummation of the re-ordered environmental structure when

the proper hour arrives. The great socially reconstructive task for Christians will before long be that of making clear to Marxists, and to other humanists who seek a socialist secular order, that true end to which an economically classless society must be put within the Offertory of Our Lord's Memorial.

#### THE WITHERING AWAY OF THE STATE AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CHURCH

When the Incarnational religious integration of human life is accomplished, Christians believe that the secular structure (now itself reintegrated in the Marxian sense) will coalesce with the religious structure. Just as Marxists show that the political bourgeois state and the economic structures of the human social order will mutually wither away within a complete secular integration, so Christians believe that the whole secular order—as a separate autonomous structure in its own right—may wither away within the Incarnational structure. The fulfilment of this end would in fact herald the advent of the Kingdom of God in earth.

Christians have traditionally used another expression for that disappearance of our now relatively autonomous and separated social structures within a single new and integrated Incarnational whole. What Marxists call a withering away, Christians call an “establishment” of the secular structure within the religious. Thus the envisioned unification of the religious and secular orders was anciently referred to as the Establishment of the Church.

It ought to be clearly evident that this word “establishment” as here defined refers to something very different from what the term has come to mean today. When, for example, we now refer to an Established Church of England, to an Established Church in fascist Spain, we mean that a particular religious organization existing alongside of the still separated secular structure, is guaranteed a certain exclusive position and power by the political state. Such an Established Church does not even have to claim the believing allegiance of the majority of the citizens of the

state! But the state guarantees certain possessions, certain buildings and endowments to the Church's exclusive use. And the state gives to the Church a more or less exclusive entrée into the fields of education and care of youth. It also calls in the Church officially to grace and to bless its own secular observances and public occasions.

Under such conditions the Church does indeed become openly the handmaid of the state, and as a kind of bargained exchange for her privileges, she lends herself to the state with special attention to its needs for controlling and mollifying its economically oppressed class of working citizens. And, by the same token she is therefore the combined servant and chaplain of the economic ruling class, which controls the political state. But all this is very far from what the idea of religious establishment originally conveyed. Originally it meant that a truly integrated union of the religious and the secular structures was to be attained. This union presupposed, of course, that practically all citizens of the state were converted Sacramental Christians. It presupposed that the central objective of all men in every occasion of their lives was that of ordering the secular structure of this world in such wise that it might be properly presented regularly at the Altar of Our Lord's Memorial under forms of natural bread and wine. It presupposed a meta-cosmic humanity co-terminous with the secular structure. Under such conditions, the political and economic structures of life would tend to become solely the institutional organizations of the Christian laity taking counsel and working together to produce an Offertory of bread and wine of the best obtainable quality. Parliaments, councils of state and economic organizations would then be simply assemblies of faithful laity in their periods of giving primary attention to the productive ordering of the social material sources of the Offertory. This is the true meaning of the Establishment of the Church in the secular world. Its achievement would indeed mean the merging of the secular structure with the Sacramental structure. It would mean indeed the withering away of a separately constituted political state, as well as of a separately existing economic organiza-

tion. Whether this kind of fully redeemed world can ever be achieved or not, can scarcely be predicted. Humanly speaking it seems remote. We are certainly very far from that situation. However, it would seem that Christians ought to work upon the assumption based in faith in Our Lord, that its attainment is a genuine possibility. For Our Lord has said: I if I be lifted up, will draw *all* men unto me.<sup>120</sup>

#### THE CHURCH'S OFFERTORY IN A SOCIALIST ORDER: THE CHRISTIAN DUTY TO WORK FOR THIS END

In any event, this kind of total social integration cannot be accomplished until the secular structure itself is given its necessary preliminary integral unity in its own right, a unity which shall make possible its further integration with the Sacramental life. At the present time, with the exception of the Soviet Russian achievement, all the economic systems we now know are still under the strains and disorders of economic class conflicts. The bourgeois political states are still the instruments of economic class repression. Before we can think of the "establishment" of the Sacramental structure, there is another "establishment" or "withering away" which needs to be accomplished first. The political and economic structures of life are still mutually disestablished. These must be made to merge in one. And this kind of mutual secular reestablishment can now be effected only on a basis of a socialized economic structure, upon a basis of the disappearance of economic classes based respectively on the ownership and non-ownership of certain kinds of property. The secular establishment must wait upon the disappearance of the political police-state power which economic class divisions now require. When this has happened, the Sacramental structure of life as set forth by the Church will have a new opportunity to show that the whole social order of human life can find its fully integrated, its organically metacosmic consummation, at the Altar of Our Lord.

This seems to be the possibility confronting the Russian

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<sup>120</sup> See Appendix VII, page 213.

Church today. Let us pray that she understands her redeeming mission in such completely Incarnational and Sacramental terms that she is able shortly to take full advantage of this unmatched historical opportunity.

But for the rest of us who still remain in a capitalist and economically class-structured world, it would seem that our primary practical emphasis ought to be on the reintegration of our secular environment. For the sake of the Christian Offertory secular socialism must be universally achieved. The bourgeois political police-states must wither away within the economic structures thus reintegrated. Only after this is accomplished can man's life find its final integration, as the ordered world in its every aspect may be fitly brought within the redeeming metacosmic action of the Memorial of Our Lord's Body and Blood.

*Adoremus in Aeternum Sanctissimum Sacramentum*

## Appendices

## APPENDIX I

### CHRISTIAN OVER-PESSIMISM *versus* HUMANIST OVER-OPTIMISM

It needs to be said, however, that even merely human efforts, if they be rational and carried through with determination, can accomplish much more for the improvement of human life than a good many people seem to imagine. It is a curious paradox of today that many so-called Christians tend to be pessimistic in this regard. They (e.g. Reinhold Niebuhr, Karl Barth and other Neo-orthodox) hold too low an opinion of man's natural rational powers for improving his present and his future in this world; for, even though man in his own unaided right cannot reach those roots of his difficulties which stem from the past, he can make substantial, if partial, contributions to the restoration of order to God's world. These Christian pessimists give too much weight to the burden of Original Sin as this operates in the natural order. But this is very understandable. Since many nominal Christians today are thoroughly steeped in prejudice against deep social change or revolution of any kind whatever, an over-emphasis upon the effect of Original Sin as this operates in the time dimension provides an excellent excuse for human inaction—and indeed, for unashamed reaction.

On the other hand, Dialectical Materialists (Communists), who dogmatically deny the existence of any power transcending our time and space, entertain an almost apocalyptic optimism concerning the possibility of the perfection of human life, without any reference to the inherited burden of past disorders. Such Materialists therefore are making the opposite mistake of denying Original Sin and its effects altogether. This mistake does doom those who persist in it to eventual disappointment and to the danger of despairing disillusion. However, Communists at least work for a better world at this moment of history, one more in accord with the will of God than is our present capitalist one. And they are not afraid of secular revolution. Therefore, in so far as they succeed in moving human life in the direction of a greater justice and a greater realization of a non-competitive, brotherly economic community, they move in the direction of God's further purpose.

Hence, their over-optimism is, at this point, infinitely preferable to the deadening and paralyzing effects of exaggerated Christian pessimism. And to the solution of that ultimate and time-transcending part of the problem which Communists now ignore, we may hope

that guidance may be given by genuine Christians when the present preliminary work accomplished by the Communists shall become ready for a divine consummation. In that future we may well believe that all men, including the inheritors of the materialist tradition themselves, will welcome the transcendent validation of their human efforts within the ultimate redeeming action of the Incarnation of the Son of God. But if radical Christian pessimists reject all possibility of any contributory human work, for such there seems no hope at all.

## APPENDIX II

### EXCURSUS ON THE MEANING OF CONCOMITANCE

This kind of necessary presence of soul wherever a living physical human body happens to be located is technically called presence by concomitance. For example, suppose a man's body is conveyed from one place to another by a railway train. His soul is not moved by the train, because his soul is an immaterial element of human nature. The physical train moves the man's physical body. But when this hypothetical man alights at his destination, his soul (as well as every other element of his individual person) is also present. If this were not so the man would not be alive. But the soul is here present at the destination, not because the train moved it, but because of a necessary concomitance with the living man's body. The train could, of course, equally well convey a dead man's body, but at the destination there would arrive no human soul, because there would be in this case no union of soul and body of the dead individual; there would be no presence of the dead man's soul by concomitance with his body.

It is after this fashion that Our Lord, as a human soul, and also as God, is present in the Sacrament of His Body and Blood. In the Sacramental Elements He has provided that the Substances of His risen human Body and Blood shall emerge within our natural world. His own complete and total Presence follows necessarily, because His human soul is united to His human Body, while these are both also inseparably united in living unity with the wholeness of His Divine Person. Our Lord is present in the wholeness of His two natures by a necessary concomitance with the Sacramental Presence of the Substances of His Body and His Blood. Cf. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*: III, Q LXXVI, Art. 1. Saint Thomas points this up by saying that if the Sacrament had been consecrated during the three day period after the Cross, while Our Lord's Body and Blood were not united to His human soul, nor to His Godhead, then Our Lord's dead Body and Blood alone would have been present. Our Lord would no more have been present on that hypothetical Altar in His wholeness than He was totally present in His tomb while His human body lay there dead.

### APPENDIX III

#### PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR A LITURGICAL OFFERTORY

In Orthodox Churches of today the Prothesis is usually placed in one of the threefold apses of the Sanctuary. There together with the Altar it is behind the Screen of the Iconastasis. This tends to obscure the part the laity have in the provision of the bread and wine. If the Anglican Communion were to revive this vital Liturgical emphasis upon the Offertory, it ought to place its Prothesis at a more appropriate position, near the Church's principal entrance.

It is easily open to any individual congregation or parish to re-establish for itself this custom, a custom which was the common practice of our ancestors in the Faith. In the ancient Church, those who came to church brought with them loaves of bread and flasks of wine for their Memorial. These had often been produced by their own labors, from their own farms and vineyards, from their household bakeries and wine presses. Our present economic and industrial processes are far too extended and ramified for bread and wine to be manufactured personally by those who come to church. Our bread and wine now have to be brought within the ambit of the Divine Community by purchase within the environmental world. However, once so purchased, they come at once to represent that Community at the Offertory. For the purchasing process is itself a redeeming act, it is a ransoming act, applying Our Lord's Atonement; whereby under present conditions the Community of Our Lord's social humanity assumes possession of these material things, whereby its own actions and relationships are projected into them, just as if there had been a direct participation in their manufacture.

It is suggested that a box of appropriate wafer breads be placed on a table at the immediate entrance of the parish church. This table should be attended by some appointed lay member of the congregation. As each member enters, let him take one of the breads, giving in return for it any amount of money which he would normally put in the collection plate, which in our present usage is passed around during the period of the Offertory.

This payment for a piece of bread could be made with as little as a single cent. Those who have sealed pledge envelopes should exchange these for their breads. The money and envelopes could be dropped, unseen by others, into a properly placed box on the same table. This should be as far as the money offering gets within the church building at the time of the service. Money offerings as such are not available for the celebration of that Memorial which Our Lord has instituted.

It must be made clear that this procedure does not in any sense involve a payment of an entrance fee into the Church. Those who are unbaptized or those who are strangers, non-members of the In-

carnational group, and who cannot therefore participate with the Community in the Offertory of its own redeeming accomplishment, under today's conditions may be admitted into the church (anciently they would have been excluded from the celebration of the Memorial), but they should not take or purchase a piece of bread. Religious, monks and nuns under vows of poverty, should take their breads without payment.

After obtaining an individual bread and leaving his money contribution behind him, let each member of the congregation now go to another table, also prepared conveniently near at hand and at the rear of the church. This is the Table of the Prothesis. A receptacle of adequate and dignified kind should be ready here. Into this all individual hosts should be dropped, as into a communal social Offering. The people can then take their customary seats in church.

At the time of the Offertory within the Liturgy, let this receptacle containing the people's breads be brought forward to be received at the Altar by the waiting Priest. This presentation may be surrounded by a certain solemnity, a procession with cross, lights and incense, (the incense to be given subsequently to the Priest for censing the offered breads after they have been placed on the Altar), or it may be done very simply, a single lay man or woman bringing them up. In any case, however, the presentation should be made by delegated lay people. It is they who are about to place their corporate accomplishments within Our Lord's social humanity upon the Altar.

Note that the Priest—in his capacity as another member of the congregation among all the rest, but not at this moment in his function as a Priest—brings in his own piece of bread already previously prepared with the Chalice and Paten. But this is merely for convenience, since it would be awkward for the Celebrant to go to the rear of the church before the service. Also, note that the people's Offering of the bread alone is sufficient to bring into high relief that which is taking place at the Offertory. To carry the same action through for the wine—as in the Eastern Rite—would be as awkward for the Western Rite as it is unnecessary. The wine for the Memorial can be placed in advance of the service within the sanctuary, quite according to our present custom.

The only member of the whole family of Anglican Liturgies which has made any move toward the restoration of the ceremonies of the Prothesis seems to be the Alternative Indian Liturgy of 1933. But even this is much too abbreviated and a clear teaching that the offered bread and wine embody the structure of the corporate life of the Community is here lacking.

## APPENDIX IV

### ECCLESIASTICAL VESTMENTS AND CATHOLIC DEMOCRACY

The principal traditional vestment worn by the celebrating Priest at Mass is the Chasuble. This vestment, whose name (from the late Latin *Casula*, meaning "little house") shows its origin, was, in the Church's early days, simply the customary garment of any ordinary male citizen of the ancient Western world. Essentially it is a circular piece of material with a hole cut in its center so that it can be put over the head and thus fall in folds about the shoulders. If it is large enough it may even reach to the ground and thus envelop the entire figure of the wearer.

It should be noted that the Chasuble is not derived from the exclusive garment of a Roman Patrician or aristocrat. It is not derived from a *toga*. It is therefore not the garment of economic or social class privilege. Originally it might well have been worn by slaves and freedmen, by professional people or by tradesmen. It corresponds, in its obviously utilitarian quality, to the simple poncho of the Americas.

Both Priest and people should remember this when the Chasuble is worn at the Altar. It is in the tradition of the common people who first heard Our Lord gladly; and those who first gathered at His Altar tended to be drawn from among the poor and the underprivileged. It is the garment of this class of people which the Priest, as representative of the Divine Community, still wears.

Today this garment is often made of finest stuff and is beautifully worked and embroidered. Through its form it still remains the symbol of the Church's continuity with an original movement among the lower economic classes of the Roman Empire towards a Divine Revolution which threatened the very existence of the contemporary economic and political ruling class, the class which wore the *toga*. At the same time, through its beauty of adornment and the glory of its gold and silver thread, it now has a prophetic reference. It still carries its ancient threat against social and economic injustice; but it refers this threat to the future as well. It asserts that this garment shall be made rich and splendid for all men everywhere. It asserts that the garments of the poor and the underprivileged shall share in the same rich beauty and abundance here set forth. It prophesies that the common people shall share justly in these things even though it require an economic revolution to accomplish it, even though those who are now unjustly clothed with the modern equivalent of the *toga*, and who therefore resist the adornment of the Chasuble for the exploited men and women upon whom they fatten and grow rich, must for their part be unclothed and overthrown.

It is significant that after the Reformation period in England

another garment called the Surplice came into almost universal use as the vestment of the Priest at Mass. This garment too has its history. Its name is derived from the late Latin *super pellicium*. It means literally something worn over a fur coat. In the medieval church in northern climes the church buildings were often cold. The monks who served them needed warm clothing and their habits were often equipped with fur capes and hoods. They therefore had need of a decent white linen garment for wear in choir, but one which could be put on without removing their furs. To meet this need, that voluminous garment which came to be known as the sur-pellisse, the Surplice, was devised.

The origin of the Surplice is entirely analogous to the origin of those peculiarly full-cut flannel trousers known as "Oxford slacks." The men of the Oxford colleges, shortly after the first world war, were wont to play golf during the afternoon attired in full-cut knee breeches known as "plus fours." When these men returned from athletics to tea, it was both bothersome and time consuming to change from plus fours to conventional trousers. Yet convention decreed that plus fours could not appear around the tea tables. Some bright youth got the idea of having flannel trousers cut so amply that they might be pulled on over the golfing togs. Thus the problem was solved to the great satisfaction of everyone.

In but a little time the full-cut Oxford slacks came to be worn as a kind of highly fashionable attire in their own right. But these flannel garments, like the Surplice, are the garments of a privileged class of people. Those who work in mines and factories have relatively little time for golf in their early afternoons, nor are they bothered by the problem of being forbidden by convention to appear later at tea while dressed in full-cut knee breeches. So Oxford slacks came for a time to be a symbol of leisurely upper-class life, and their fashion endured long after their functional need had passed with the passing of the prior fashion of plus fours. Likewise, Anglican Priests no longer need wear fur capes in their comfortably heated church buildings, but they still regularly don the garments of their forbears in class privilege who first invented the flowing Surplice.

Because the Surplice has its origin in the special needs of a peculiar ecclesiastical group, it is in no sense symbolically the garment of the common man, but rather that of a privileged, a protected and a highly specialized class. It is almost uncanny to see by what unerringly keen historical instinct the Anglican Communion, itself notoriously the church of an upper and a privileged economic class, has seized upon this flowing white garment of privilege and class separation as the symbol of its peculiar ethos. When the Anglican Priest dons his Surplice, he does not identify himself representatively with the common man, nor with the movement of the Christian masses towards the economic justice of the Kingdom of God. Instead, he

puts on a garment not merely analogous to the toga, but one which looks in fact very much like one. Thus he symbolically separates himself haughtily from common outsiders, while he confirms his own well-fenced and comfortable flock in all the smooth complacencies of its economic privilege and aloofness.

As if the use of the Surplice at Mass were not a sufficient affront to all decent people who understand the symbols of historical development, many Bishops of the Anglican Communion also refuse to vest themselves as democratic representatives of the common people of the Church. The proper democratic Liturgical dress of a Catholic Bishop (as well as for a Priest upon certain occasions) has an origin like that of the Chasuble. It is a simple, full-cut cape, now called a Cope. Originally it had a hood attached at the neck which could be pulled up to protect the head. It was the ancient common man's protection against storms and cold. To this day its Latin name is still the *Pluviale*, the "rain coat." But Anglican Bishops prefer in many instances to wear a curious clothing combination known as the Rochet and Chimere. This Episcopal habit is strictly speaking not a Liturgical vestment at all. It is a kind of clothing which, in medieval times, had come to be worn by Bishops when they sat in the politically undemocratic House of Lords, or when they attended Court functions either of a social or state character. Thus, by his dress in church, the typical Anglican Bishop now adds his own symbolic witness to that of the Priest's Surplice, to the effect that he is not a representative of the common man, that he scorns the everyday garments of the working class and that he is an undemocratic ruler, preferring to identify himself with the ruling class of aristocracy and economic privilege.

Let the common people of the Church ponder these things when they see their Priests in Surplices and their Bishops in Rochet and Chimere. For these outer symbols of history do not emerge purely by meaningless accident. They are instead the true expressions of the very genius of an upper class-conscious Church. And whether individual Bishops and Priests personally understand these things or not, when they refuse to wear the Cope and Chasuble they identify themselves with a privilege and a class reaction which is still to be overthrown by democratic Christians. When they reject the Cope and Chasuble of the ancient Catholic Democracy, they refuse to wear representatively the garments of the common people everywhere. When the people see these things let them be warned that "their" Bishops and Priests have got democratically out of hand.

Let the Bishops and Priests of the Anglican Communion change their privileged class-conscious garments for the ancient democratic clothing of the people's Catholic Church. But let them do this for the right reasons. Let them do it not for reasons of modern pomp and circumstance, nor yet for reasons of mere aesthetic satisfaction.

Let them again don the Cope and the Chasuble as an act of democratic humility. Let them eschew the prelacy of royal or abbatial dress. Let them proclaim openly and to every eye that they are the servants not only of God, but of Our Lord's Redeemed People. Let them dutifully wear that People's representative clothing, to serve and to exalt, and not to oppress, the common man.

## APPENDIX V

### THE LITURGICAL CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

This argument leads to the conclusion that the corporate Confession with its public Absolution within the Liturgy should be integrated specifically with the Offertory. For the Confession and Absolution are necessary in order that the bread and wine of the Divine Community may be brought to the Altar. The Absolution is the final perfecting Act of Our Lord Himself whereby He makes ready His own Offertory. This Offertory has been prepared in and through His Community, but it is marred by human failures in the required complete cooperation in His redeeming enterprise. It is through the Absolution that the bread and wine are ultimately made available for Our Lord's Consecration.

Unfortunately there has been much confusion about the function of Confession and Absolution in connection with the Liturgy. In earliest times it was doubtless not included within the Liturgy proper at all. In more recent times its position in the liturgical sequence has varied to correspond with varying notions concerning its function or application. Western custom has still further confused the matter by causing the celebrating priest to make his own Confession just before the beginning of the Liturgy while a second Confession is made on behalf of the Congregation just before the people receive Holy Communion. In general, both the Latin and Anglican rites seem to regard Confession and Absolution as preparing individual communicants for the reception of the Holy Communion. But if the Absolution is really Our Lord's atoning response whereby He perfects the offerings of His Community for a succeeding reception into the content of His risen Body and Blood, then the Confession should be made and the Absolution should be given while the offerings of the Divine Community, under the forms of natural bread and wine, are being placed upon the Altar. At this same time, of course, and through this very reperfection of the Offertory, the communicants are also adequately prepared for their Holy Communion at the later point of the Liturgy after the Consecration.

The following liturgical suggestions are therefore made. These revisions, with the Confession and Absolution integrated with the Offertory, are based upon ancient Western forms. Therefore they should not seem strange or unfamiliar to anyone who knows the

traditional Liturgy of the Western Church. The suggested Form of Confession is, however, new. The present Form of Confession found in the Prayer Books of the Anglican Communion is utterly unsuitable on several counts. Prayer Book revisions of the future ought to look earnestly towards its elimination.

Firstly, it provides no opportunity of Confession of the Priest himself to the people, and it provides no Absolution for the Priest from the people. All sense of mutual obligation based upon a mutual corporate involvement in the disorders confessed is conspicuously absent. The absolving power of the laity remains uninvoked. Thus the Prayer Books appear to know nothing of the universal Priesthood of all believers and the exercise of this Priesthood in the Absolution of their Priest by the people is pointedly (and undemocratically) suppressed. Instead, the Priest leads the people in a single confession and then proceeds to give an Absolution without having received before this—as a kind of preparation for the exercise of his own absolving function—any reciprocated Absolution from the people whatever. In the English Prayer Book of 1662 the Priest is not even directed necessarily to participate in the Confession at all!

Secondly, no reference whatever is made to the Company of Heaven nor to the rest of the Church, either in this world or the next, before which great cloud of witnesses Confession must be made if the Confession and Absolution taken together make a corporate act in which corporate imperfections are to be remedied and healed.

Thirdly, the language used seems to strive for a subjective emotional effect of pseudo-sorrow. To attain this technical result expressions like “bewail,” “most grievously,” “provoking most justly wrath and indignation,” “the intolerable burden,” etc., are introduced. This kind of literary striving after interior tensions, a striving fortified by rhythmic tautologies like “manifold sins and wickedness” and “from time to time,” is thoroughly to be deplored. Our Lord may, of course, grant the grace of compunction to people as they confess their sins. If this happens it ought to be accepted thankfully, but it is not of the essence of contrition or of true penance. The human function in penance is simply to confess sins in a realistic, frank and business-like manner, while making a movement of the will not to repeat them in the future. Any attempt to induce a kind of abject trembling, an emotionally felt shame and sorrow about sins, can only end in unreality for the majority of people on most occasions. Furthermore, this particular attempt to arouse interior tensions by the use of sonorous Elizabethan phrases, more often than not actually distracts the human will and thus, as an inevitable psychological result, makes the future commission of sins confessed not less, but more probable!

Finally, this Form of Confession obviously emerges from a legalistic view of sins as transgressions of a set of rules—the rules, no doubt,

written in the Jewish Law with which the English Eucharist so unfortunately opens. The concept of a breaking of Jewish Law which "provokes the wrath and indignation" of the "Judge of all men," when put forward in this unmitigated fashion, is thoroughly unchristian. There is no trace or hint here that the redemption of the world is a corporate, re-creative, redeeming enterprise, and that individual sins are essentially defections of individual allegiance to a common social task.

It would seem, in short, that in order to make a proper Confession of corporate sin, in a way appropriate to the preparation of the Offertory for presentation upon the Altar, we must first be delivered from the intolerable burden of this really preposterous form of wordy and subjective Confession which we, from time to time, are now compelled most grievously to repeat.

#### AN INTEGRATION OF THE GENERAL CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION WITH THE LITURGICAL OFFERTORY

*Each member of the Divine Community, upon entering the church building, deposits his money offering in a place prepared at the church door. He receives in return a wafer of bread which thus becomes his individual contribution to the corporate Offertory. Before taking his seat he leaves this wafer in an Offertory receptacle conveniently placed at the rear of the church interior.*

*The Ordinary of the Mass begins in the customary manner, save that at the time of the Introit the Confessions of the officiating Priest and his Ministers, together with the corresponding Absolutions, are omitted.*

*When the Priest, having vested, approaches the Altar, he makes the due reverence, and signs himself with the Sign of the Cross from forehead to breast, and says in a loud voice:*

† In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

*Then with hands joined before his breast he begins the Antiphon:  
I will go unto the Altar of God.*

*The Ministers and all the people respond:  
Even unto the God of my joy and gladness.*

*Then alternately with the Ministers and people he says the following:*

#### Psalm 43

GIVE sentence with me, O God, and defend my cause against the ungodly people: O deliver me from the deceitful and wicked man.

*Ministers and people:* For thou art the God of my strength, why hast thou put me from thee: and why go I so heavily, while the enemy oppresseth me?

*Priest:* O send out thy light and thy truth, that they may lead me: and bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy dwelling.

*Ministers and people:* And that I may go unto the altar of God, even unto the God of my joy and gladness: and upon the harp will I give thanks unto thee, O God, my God.

*Priest:* Why art thou so heavy, O my soul: and why art thou so disquieted within me?

*Ministers and people:* O put thy trust in God: for I will yet give him thanks, which is the help of my countenance, and my God.

*Priest:* Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.

*Ministers and people:* As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

*The Priest repeats the Antiphon:*

I will go unto the altar of God.

R Even unto the God of my joy and gladness.

*He signs himself, saying:*

℣ Our help is in the name of the Lord.

R Who hath made heaven and earth.

℣ Wilt thou not turn again and quicken us, O God?

R That thy people may rejoice in thee.

℣ O Lord, show thy mercy upon us.

R And grant us thy salvation.

℣ O Lord, hear my prayer.

R And let my cry come unto thee.

℣ The Lord be with you.

R And with thy spirit.

*And extending and joining his hands, he says:*

*Let us pray, and ascending to the Altar, continues in an audible voice:*

TAKE away from us, we beseech thee, O Lord, our iniquities: that we may be worthy to enter with pure minds into the Holy of Holies. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

*Then, with hands joined upon the Altar, he says, bowing:*

WE pray thee, O Lord, by the merits (of thy Saints, whose relics are here, and) of all the Saints: (*He kisses the Altar in the middle*) that thou wouldest vouchsafe to pardon all our sins. Amen.

*Note that the Collect for Purity in the Prayer Book Office may be substituted for the preceding prayers.*

*The rest as in the Ordinary and Canon of the English Missal or the Book of Common Prayer, with the exception of the changes here noted.*

*Immediately before the Oblations of bread and wine are placed upon the Altar at the Offertory, the Priest (together with the Ministers, if it be a Solemn Mass) goes to the midst of the Altar, and standing there (the ministers, if they be present, on either side), with hands joined, and bowing slightly, in an audible voice, makes his Confession:*

I CONFESS to God almighty, to blessed Mary ever Virgin, to blessed Michael the Archangel, to the whole Company of Heaven, to all the Church, and especially to you my brothers here present, that I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word, and deed, by my fault, by my own fault, by my own most grievous fault: I confess that I have wounded the Body of the Son of God on earth and that these His offerings of bread and wine are marred through my neglect and my wrong doings.

THEREFORE I beg blessed Mary ever Virgin, blessed Michael the Archangel, the whole Company of Heaven, all the Church, and especially you my brothers here present, to pray for me to the Lord our God: that through the atoning action of His Son, He may forgive my sins, and so perfect these offerings, making them worthy of His Holy Sacrifice.

*The Priest then says:*

LORD, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof, but speak the word only and I shall be healed.

*All the Ministers and people respond:*

ALMIGHTY GOD have mercy upon thee, forgive thee thy sins, and bring thee to everlasting life.

*Priest: Amen.*

*He then stands erect and the Ministers and people make their Confession:*

WE CONFESS to God almighty, to blessed Mary ever Virgin, to blessed Michael the Archangel, to the whole Company of Heaven, to all the Church, and to thee, Father, that we have sinned exceed-

ingly in thought, word, and deed, by our fault, by our own fault, by our own most grievous fault: We confess that we have wounded the Body of the Son of God on earth and that these His offerings of bread and wine are marred through our neglect and our wrong doings.

THEREFORE we beg blessed Mary ever Virgin, blessed Michael the Archangel, the whole Company of Heaven, all the Church, and thee, Father, to pray for us to the Lord our God: that through the atoning action of His Son, He may forgive our sins, and so perfect these offerings, making them worthy of His Holy Sacrifice.

*Then is said:*

LORD, we are not worthy that thou shouldest come under our roof, but speak the word only and we shall be healed.

*The Priest, with joined hands and without turning from the Altar, begins the Absolution, saying:*

ALMIGHTY GOD have mercy upon you, forgive you your sins, and bring to you everlasting life.

Rv Amen.

*Then, turning to the people, he continues:*

THE ALMIGHTY and merciful Lord grant unto you pardon, absolution  $\text{\texttt{P}}$  and remission of your sins.

Rv Amen.

*The Oblations of bread and wine are now brought to the Altar by a duly appointed representative of the Congregation from the place where they have been deposited by the people. If it be a Solemn Mass, the bearer of the Offertory is preceded by a Cross, lights and incense. The appointed lay man or woman carrying the Offertory should not be vested, but should come forth from the Congregation in ordinary attire.*

*The Priest receives the people's Offertory by the hands of a Server (by the hands of the Deacon, if it be a Solemn Mass), standing facing the people in the midst of the Altar. He then turns to the Altar and offers the people's breads, together with his own, upon the Paten, the people's Oblations being placed, if convenient, in a Pyx, while all say together:*

RECEIVE, O holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, this host, now made spotless by thy Son's atoning power, and which we, thine unworthy servants, offer unto thee, our living and true God, for our numberless sins, offenses, and negligences, and for all our Congregation, as also for all faithful Christians, both living and departed: that it may avail both to us and to them for salvation unto eternal life. Amen.

*Then, making the Sign of the Cross with the Paten itself, the Priest places the Oblations of bread upon the Corporal. The Deacon ministers the wine, the Subdeacon the water, in the Chalice: or if it be a Low Mass, the Priest pours both, and blesses with the Sign of the Cross the water to be mixed in the Chalice, saying audibly:*

O GOD, who didst wonderfully create, and yet more wonderfully renew the dignity of human nature: grant that by the mystery of this water and wine we may be made partakers of His divinity, who vouchsafed to share our humanity, Jesus Christ thy Son our Lord: Who liveth and reigneth with thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God: world without end. Amen.

*Then the Priest offers the Chalice, the people together with him, saying:*

WE OFFER unto thee, O Lord, the Chalice of Salvation, humbly beseeching thy mercy: that in the sight of thy divine majesty it may ascend as a sweet-smelling savour for our salvation, and for that of the whole world. Amen.

*Then he makes the Sign of the Cross with the Chalice, and places it upon the Corporal, and covers it with the Pall: then with hands joined upon the Altar, bowing slightly, he says, together with all the people:*

IN THE SPIRIT of humility and with contrite hearts, let us be accepted of thee, O Lord: and so let our sacrifice be offered in thy sight this day, that it may be well pleasing unto thee, O Lord God.

*Then the Priest, standing erect, extends his hands, raises them and joins them, and lifting his eyes to heaven and straightway lowering them, says in an audible voice:*

COME, thou Sanctifier almighty, everlasting God: (*He blesses the Oblations, proceeding:*) and bless this sacrifice, prepared for thy holy name.

*The Priest now censes the Oblations (if it be a Solemn Mass) and proceeds to the Lavabo in the usual manner, except that Psalm 26, at the washing of the hands, is said audibly. He then returns to the midst of the Altar, where, with hands joined, and bowing slightly, he says, together with all the people:*

RECEIVE, O HOLY TRINITY, this oblation which we offer unto thee in memory of the passion, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ, our Lord: and in honour of blessed Mary ever Virgin, of blessed John Baptist, of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, of these, and of all the Saints: that it may avail for their honour, and for our salvation: and may they, whose memory we celebrate on earth, vouchsafe to intercede for us in heaven. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

*The Priest then kisses the Altar, and turning to the people, he extends and joins his hands, and says:*

PRAY, brethren, that this my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God the Father almighty.

*The Ministers and people respond:*

THE LORD receive this sacrifice at thy hands, to the praise and glory of His name, and both to our benefit and to that of all His holy Church.

*Priest: Amen.*

*The Preface and Canon of the Mass proceed in the usual manner, save that the Benedictus Qui Venit is omitted after the Sanctus. Amen is not said and the Canon follows without interruption.*

*Immediately before the Priest's own Communion the words Lord, I Am Not Worthy, etc., are omitted. Instead, the Priest says secretly:*

BLESSED is He that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

*The Communion of the people follows the customary order, except that the Confession and Absolution are not repeated at this point.*

*During the Communion of the Priest the bell is rung and the people come forward.*

*When the Priest turns himself towards the people in the midst of the Altar, holding the consecrated Host raised above the Paten or Pyx, he says:*

BEHOLD, the Lamb of God, behold Him that taketh away the sins of the world.

*The people respond:*

BLESSED is He that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

*or*

*Priest: ECCE, Agnus Dei, Ecce qui tollit peccata mundi.*

*People: BENEDICTUS qui venit in nomine Domini. Hosanna in excelsis.*

## APPENDIX VI

### FREE ENTERPRISE AND WAR

Note that when we are forced by the present terrible world situation to think about a remedy in terms of a larger international cooperation, we still keep insisting that such cooperation must not transcend or override "purely" national self-interest. This is of course a completely self-contradictory way of thinking.

The root of the difficulty is that international political cooperation can be achieved only among national units which are themselves internally organized upon a cooperative economic basis. National competitive capitalist organization of the material means of production and distribution requires international imperialist economic competition, both for markets and for sources of raw materials.

This kind of international competition leads quite unavoidably to wars. Any proposal for organizing for international peace while this economic system prevails must be largely unreal. It is necessarily a mere bandying of words. For political forces always reflect economic forces. The political system is always the handmaid of the economic system. Hence competitive economics require competitive politics in the international scene. War, according to the acknowledged authority of Karl von Clausewitz, is only the continuation of political action by other means. Open warfare is therefore the inevitable and logical outcome of that veiled economic warfare now admired under the formula of "Free Enterprise."

Imperialist international competition which leads to war does not result from the fact that "wicked people" deliberately choose this evil course in spite of the fact that peaceful solutions are open to them. Peaceful solutions often are not open to the international conflicts of interests between capitalist nations. They are not always open even to conflicting economic group interests within delimited national areas. To this all civil wars—the United States Civil War in particular—bear historical witness. War could not be avoided within an unmitigated capitalist economy even if the angels themselves attempted to operate it.

Because continuing international peace is illogical among nations which are internally organized on the basis of economic competition, it is our own economic system which needs to be attacked by Christians. Without this, the attempted moral reform of individuals is worse than useless. Its inevitable failure to bring a remedy to the basic situation and to prevent war leads to frustration and defeatism among those who pin their hopes to the Christian "conversion" of individuals, while leaving untouched the basically contradictory problem which the capitalist organization of our material productive forces presents. Hence Christians who now maintain that their religion is indifferent to the economic organization within which they live have fallen into a confusion arising from an ignorance in this day both indefensible and inexcusable.

## APPENDIX VII

### AN INSTANCE OF NEO-THOMISTIC MISUNDERSTANDING

M. Jacques Maritain in a brief but interesting discussion of the corporate social-individual personal problem (*The Rights of Man*

*and Natural Law*, New York, 1943), seems to think that what we have here attributed to a human compromise conditioned by the fact that the world is fallen, is actually and fundamentally the only final solution. He accepts as satisfactory a permanently *pluralistic* temporal social order, within which there may always be various kinds of relatively autonomous corporate associations. These may be those of the political state (M. Maritain rather significantly omits all mention of a possible economic structure as having a separable corporate existence), the family, certain fraternal lodges, etc. To any or all of these men may give themselves socially for certain specifically delimited corporate ends. They will distribute their various allegiances among these by virtue of certain kinds of selected personal potentialities for development, for action, for further self-realization. But other potentialities, those which are incompatible with the specific corporate allegiance under consideration, will be withheld in order to be bestowed elsewhere. In particular, personal potentialities for relationships with God have to be withheld from all corporate entities constituted within the temporal level of this world. The reason for this is that these can never be properly realized within any temporal order whatever.

M. Maritain admits that *in a sense* an individual may give himself in complete allegiance to a political state, but *only by virtue of certain elements which are in him*. No man may give his total allegiance to any human corporate group by virtue of *all* that is within him. And that which is not so given is reserved to the individual for some other end. His authority for this is cited from St. Thomas Aquinas, *Sum. Theol.*, II-II, 64, 2 and I-II, 21, 4, ad. 3. This seems to be an acceptance of what we have called "corporateness with reservations." M. Maritain knows nothing of the possible incorporation of the political structure into the Incarnational.

Those potentialities of individual persons which cannot be realized within any temporal society (because they have an eternal reference), must be given directly and supratemporally to God. To this latter end, according to M. Maritain, there exists the Church which transcends every human and temporal order. The Church is *not of this world* (italics are those of M. Maritain). The Church is that transcendent social entity through which alone the deepest and finest elements of personal human life (reserved from *all* human social entanglements) may be given to God.

This view seems to assert that a full corporate social realization of man can never be entirely and inclusively coincident with individual personal self-realization, even within the Incarnation. On the other hand, the contention of our present argument is that in an unfallen world, and also within a redeemed world, that is, within the social structure of the Divine Community, there would be precisely this perfect and all-inclusive coincidence. In passing it may be

remarked that this is also the Classic view, namely that in a perfectly ordered world, the individual and the social goods would be completely coincident.

But M. Maritain says that certain elements within individual persons (the deepest and finest) have to by-pass all human (temporal) social structures and must be realized "vertically" (M. Maritain's word), by a kind of off-side route, through the transcendent Church. He seems, therefore, to think that the Church Transcendent can be entered apart from the temporally initiated Offertory. Our contention is, instead, that in an integrated (redeemed) social order, every element of personal individual life may be given unreservedly to the social body of Our Lord's humanity, even as this takes form in the level of this world. Those elements of human nature which cannot be fully realized within the temporal level (and which, according to M. Maritain have to be by-passed to God through a transcendent Church) can in fact be given totally to Our Lord within His Offertory. That all the elements of human personality are not consummated there in a final sense does not mean that they must be withheld or personally *reserved*. It means, instead, that they do not find their *final ends* within the level of the Offertory. Nevertheless, it is *in and through* the Offertory (where they are unreservedly given) that they are carried to their final ends in the transit of the Cross. M. Maritain's solution, on the other hand, would seem logically fearful of giving all that is within man to God through the channel of the Offertory, because the Offertory is temporally initiated. He suggests that at least some things in personal man must be "short-circuited" into the divine level, the very notion which we have here decried.

We contend that *everything* in man must be ordered within the temporal order of the Incarnation—within the human social body of Our Lord—so that in and through this complete social integration at the temporal level it may pass beyond to the level of an eternal consummation in its Consecration, and that it may then be returned to a fully redeemed personal realization in the Holy Communion. Our view seems equally well in agreement with that of St. Thomas's statement that "man is not ordered to political society by reason of himself *as a whole* and by reason of *all that is within him*." This is true in that there is much in every human being which cannot be finally realized within a political (or any other merely human) social structure. Man may not give *all that is in him* to any *non-Sacramental* temporal social entity as if it could find there its final end or resting point. That way lies fascism. But in a Sacramentally ordered world, the elements of human nature which cannot find their ends in this world (and what such elements ultimately can there find their ends in any case?) do not need to be withheld from the social whole of the Offertory. On the contrary, they must all first take their integrally ordered places within the structure of the Offertory, because

by moving *through* it (not "vertically" past it) they enter into the transit of the Cross and are then realized in an ultimate sense within the level of Our Lord's divine nature. Only in and through the Offertory does time pass into eternity.

M. Maritain's solution, by accepting as an unavoidable fact that certain elements of human nature can never be integrated within any temporal structure (i.e. logically, therefore, that these must be withheld even from the Offertory) and must always be by-passed "vertically" through a transcendent Church to God, cuts the ground from under Our Lord's full Incarnational and Sacramental action. In such a case, the deepest elements of the human person would always be withheld from the Offertory and then lifted up to God (through prayer and private self-oblation?) into the transcendent Church, quite apart from Our Lord's Memorial.

In the interpretation of M. Maritain, the possibility of a total Sacramental integration of human life in its entirety is gravely compromised. For if, on the one hand, there are (as he suggests) certain *things of Caesar* which may properly be given to various pluralistic, relatively autonomous temporal social structures persisting outside the Offertory, then these elements would seem by this fact to be lost to the Offertory. They would have already found another and a final end within this world! On the other hand, if there are deeper individual elements of personal life which one might say are "too good" (i.e. "too eternal") to be given even within the temporally initiated Offertory itself, and which need therefore to be by-passed to God, then this leaves the road open to all the evils of a permanently dualistic view of the redemption of human life. The temporal order is then not to be redeemed integrally as a basis for its eternal consummation. It is, rather, to be largely left behind to its temporal fate. It is merely the temporal framework within which the eternal elements of the human person get their "practice" for eternal existence. The highest potentialities of man are to be realized, not through an Incarnational redemption of this world, but by an extrication *from* this world into eternity. From Zoroaster we learn of a dualism of light and darkness; from the Gnostic East we have a dualism of matter and spirit. It would seem that M. Maritain would now present us with a new dualism, that of the horizontal and the vertical. On this point we here take sharp issue with M. Maritain. His view seems colored with that false next-worldliness which characterizes the contemporary Roman Communion. His is a highly *non-liturgical* solution of the problem.







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